

# FosterlineBC

~ Fostering Awareness ~



October 2010  
Volume 8, Issue 5

**BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations  
debuts a new look to Celebrate  
Foster Family Month 2010!**





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## BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations

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Treasurer	Les Toth Central Island
Secretary	Louise Dol Central Island

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Vancouver Coastal	Peter Dueck
Fraser	Russell Pohl
Interior	Marcy Perron
North	Sherrie Jones
Vancouver Island	Vacant
IFCO Delegate	Melanie Filiatrault

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The BCFFPA is a provincial organization for foster parents, run by foster parents. We are a registered Society aiming to bring foster parents, social workers and others together in order to continuously improve the standard of care for BC's children in care. BCFFPA provides education, training and professional development as well as advocacy, support and assistance for the foster parents of BC.

**FosterlineBC** (previously InfoLetter) is published 4 times per year (January, April, July, October).

**Submissions**—Forward articles, personal stories or ideas to the BCFFPA office. Materials may be edited for length and suitability.

**Advertising**—Please contact the BCFFPA office for advertising opportunities, sizes and rates.

## ~ President's Report ~

We are now into October and hopefully the rush and craziness of September is behind us. I know for myself it is great to get back into the regular routine but getting there is an interesting journey, to say the least.

October is a month of reflection for me. Thanksgiving gives us the opportunity to think back on the past year and all that we have experienced, both the good and the not so good; what we have learned and accomplished, laughed about and cried about but mostly lived and are thankful for.

I have learned a lot this past year. I have learned that the Foster Parents of our Province have taken on more with less supports than in previous years and, regardless, we are succeeding. I have also learned that being President is more involved than I first thought!

This brings me to the other important reflection. Happy Foster Parent Appreciation Month! I want to thank you all for your dedication and perseverance for the young in our Province. Your continued support and the work you do makes all the difference in the lives of these young people that, through no fault of their own, come to live with us. I hope all of you have a chance to join in the appreciation events in your community and bask in the outward show of appreciation.

I see the joy and sadness we all experience when ever two or more Foster Parents get together. The few minutes of connectedness give us the energy to go on. To that end I would like to encourage you to attend your local meeting. If there are no meetings available, please contact our office and they will help you set up your Local. This is a place to talk freely about fostering and work together to solve issues and share workable solutions. Remember one voice is quiet, many are loud.

I would like to say welcome back to Jayne Wilson, who has returned to the Provincial office. I'd also like to welcome Russell Pohl to the Board of Directors. Russell is our new Fraser Region delegate. Russell has been a foster parent for many years and I look forward to working with him.

Sincerely

Heather Bayes  
President, BCFFPA Board of Directors

### Our Mission

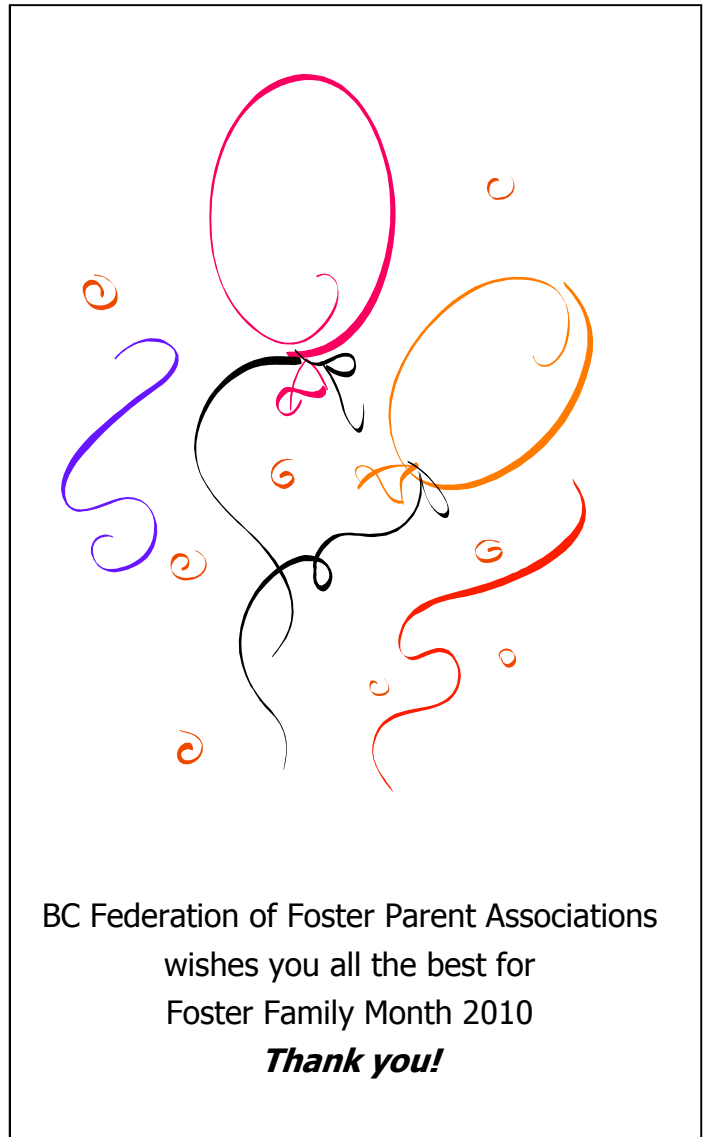
The BCFFPA represents and supports all Foster Parents to provide quality in-home foster care in British Columbia

### Our Vision

Supporting children and youth to reach their full potential through excellence in foster care

### Our Belief

Resilient Foster Parents = Empowered Children and Youth



BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations  
wishes you all the best for  
Foster Family Month 2010  
***Thank you!***



call us!

fosterlineBC  
1-800-663-9999  
we're here for you





## **A Message from the Honourable Mary Polak Minister of Children and Family Development**

This year is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Foster Family Month in British Columbia – a major milestone for foster families in B.C. and the organizations that support them!

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the important work that foster families undertake throughout the year to support our children and youth in care. You take on one of society's most important jobs by caring for children and youth at a time when they need it the most and opening your hearts to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

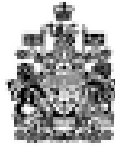
In B.C., there are around 3,400 foster families caring for over 6,000 children and youth. These children arrive in your homes with a diverse range of needs, a history that is unique to them and a common desire for stability in what may seem a chaotic and uncaring world. As foster parents, you help children, youth and their families come through some of the most challenging situations and - by recognizing and building on their strengths – help them develop the resilience they need to reach their full potential. All of this strengthens not only those children but also the fabric of our communities.

The reality is, there is always a need for more individuals and families to open their hearts and their homes to help children and youth. As you, who have experienced the joys and challenges of foster parenting first hand know, the most important qualification someone can bring to this role is a desire to provide a supportive, caring home environment and to make a positive difference in a child's life. I ask that you encourage anyone interested in foster parenting to call the Fosterline at 1 800-663-9999 for more information.

I want to say a special thank you to the BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations for your outstanding commitment to supporting foster families across our province. To the many thousands of foster families who make such a real and lasting difference in the lives of our most vulnerable children and youth: you have my utmost respect and heartfelt thanks for all that you do, each and every day.

The Honourable Mary Polak, Minister of Children and Family Development at the Foster Family Month event at the Legislature on October 4, 2010.





PRIME MINISTER . PREMIER MINISTRE

*It gives me great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to everyone marking **National Foster Family Week**, from October 17 – 23, 2010.*

*This week recognizes the important role and contributions of foster families in Canada. Foster families step in voluntarily where family structures can no longer cope and children are unable to live in their own homes. Whether the placement is for a few days or for many years, foster parents make a positive difference in the lives of children with complex needs by providing a stable, nurturing environment.*

*I would like to commend the many thousands of Canadian foster parents who generously expand their family circles to include children in need. The path you have chosen requires extraordinary patience and love, and the rewards are often intangible or fleeting, but you may take satisfaction in knowing that your selfless actions are helping to shape our nation's future.*

*On behalf of the Government of Canada, I offer you my best wishes for a most enjoyable and memorable week.*

*The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.*

OTTAWA  
2010



## YOU ARE THE GREATEST!! CELEBRATING FOSTER FAMILY MONTH!

On behalf of the Canadian Foster Family Association I would like to send best wishes to all the foster families in British Columbia being recognized during Foster Family Month in October.

Other Provinces and Territories across Canada will be celebrating during National Foster Family Week – October 17 to 23, 2010.

The CFFA Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your dedication, commitment and caring for children and youth who you open your homes and hearts to throughout the year.

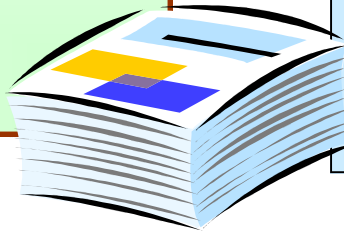
We hope that you have a wonderful month and are able to attend the special events planned in your community to celebrate the work you do all year long!

Sheila Durnford  
President, Canadian Foster Family Association

### ***What is the BCFFPA doing for YOU?***

The Provincial BCFFPA is *currently* addressing the following issues with the Ministry of Children and Family Development:

- Impact of HST on foster parents
- Closure of foster homes without notice
- Changes in contracts from bed-specific to child-specific



Having trouble getting homeowners or tenant insurance due to your fostering profession?

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Call Megson Fitzpatrick Insurance Services.

*Ralph Libby or Barb Fowler  
will be happy to assist you.*

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[www.megsonfitzpatrick.com](http://www.megsonfitzpatrick.com)

# Regional Delegate Reports

## Vancouver Coastal Report by Peter Dueck

It's Fall! Kids are back in school (my hat off to the genius who invented an institution called school which takes care of our children and as a bonus tries to teach them the basics to support their parents in old age). The Board is now full speed ahead on a full roster of activities.

Welcome Jayne! Vancouver Coastal welcomes you to the BCFFPA. We promise lots of challenges and road blocks and lots of fun. We look forward to working with you in the weeks and months to come.

### *What's New?*

New for this Fall is my attempt to access more grass-roots reporting; reports from Locals. We should have done this a long time ago but with the geographic changes in the Vancouver and Fraser regions, reports from Locals is overdue.

### *Ministry Boundary Changes*

The regional boundary changes became effective on June 1, 2010. Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows, Tri Cities, New Westminster and Burnaby have been transferred from the Fraser region to Vancouver Coastal. "The geographic boundary shifts have been undertaken to create two Lower Mainland regions of similar size..." (June 1, 2010, Denis Padmore, Regional Executive Director). Over the years, with the much slower population growth in Vancouver compared to the Fraser Valley, it was time to equalize in the interests of fairness and efficiency.

The impact on BCFFPA is dramatic in that it transfers three active Locals from the Fraser to Vancouver Coastal, Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge) Tri Cities (Coquitlam and area) and Burnaby.

October is FOSTER FAMILY month. Congratulations to all who help the children.

*"Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable." - Kenyan proverb*

### *Tri-Cities Report ~ submitted by Jan Chapman*

Tri-City Local Support Group had a wonderful summer. The Executive met and elections were held. A decision was made to enter the e-mail age and support Foster Parents by giving them information on fostering and supporting them with advocates and info. A monthly e-mail letter and a list of all our names if they wish to make personal contact will be available.

We have been informed by MCFD that a new procedure for Relief Caregivers was initiated in August 2010. Initially only new relief caregivers will have to follow this new procedure but eventually all relief workers will come under this review. The main concern of foster parents is that the new procedure may make it difficult to get people to do relief but we truly will not know until we begin to follow the procedure.

In our area a workshop on infant abuse and neglect will be attended by Resource workers and one foster parent chosen from the area. We have been told by Resources that e-mail cannot be used to communicate to social workers if it contains names, situations or circumstances pertaining to children in care. Fax or phone is alright so far.

The 53 hour education course is available to all foster parents. In our area Hollyburn offers the training: call 1-877-926-1185. May all of you have a joyful and rewarding Fall.

## Fraser Report by Russell Pohl

Ok then, some of you may or may not know me. As I am just starting with my delegate position, I thought it would be great if I just told you a bit about myself before digging in, so...here goes.

I was the president of the Fraser Valley Foster Parents Association. In my position with the association I was given the opportunity to work with great Board members. I had the privilege to meet many wonderful foster parents. It was my esteemed honor to work with many of the finest social workers. As a support worker with the Association I heard many stories of foster parents that have not been so lucky.

You may also know me as the guy with the Christmas house. We used to decorate our home extensively and invite people to tour the inside and the out. We have raised monies for foster kids and have handed out many bursaries through the Fraser Valley Foster Parents Association.

I have been a foster parent now going into the 10th year. We have been blessed to have had well over 40 kids come through our home. Recently five of those that were traveling through our home made a stop. I with my partner of 23 years, have decided to adopt 5 of our kids all at the same time. These five added to my existing two now give us 7 plus several grandmas and babas. Our extended family is huge as I am sure you can imagine. As an only child I never thought I would welcome the day to have names drawn for Christmas! The time is fast approaching. I have some great stories about the journey to this time and place.

Although we still have one fostering bed open, I am taking a break from daily fostering and am looking at more short-term or respite. My partner, Darrell and myself own a catering company ([www.mrmomsworld.com](http://www.mrmomsworld.com)) and bakery/cafe as well.

I regularly speak on a variety of topics and will be going to New York in December to do just that. I have several seminars that I will be speaking at in Minnesota in the new year. You may check out my website for further info. We have many projects on the go from cookbooks to TV pilots. Everything takes money, time and dedicated people so who knows when



## Regional Delegate Reports Cont.

they shall all come about. As you can see our house never has a dull moment.

As a family we love to travel and have done a fair amount in the USA and of course in Canada. We just returned from our summer trip to Disneyland, Las Vegas and the Redwoods. The best time to do Disney is the last week in August and first week in September. No more than a 15 minute wait on any ride. Color me happy!!!!!! The interesting part is we camped in the Redwoods. My idea of camping up until now is a Motel 6. I am reformed I assure you. If you want an amazing campground in the Redwoods to stay at give me a shout. Simply amazing. And no, although I usually win enough in Vegas to keep Darrell going and me to take a little back, this was the year of ZIP... I was afforded the luxury of continuous gambling through the continuous, albeit small winnings of my partner. So don't call for a loan.

I am hoping you will all contact me should there be anything that we should tell the rest of BC. I hope to be able to talk to everyone via e-mails about what is happening in our region and take those things to our Board. E-mail me at russell.p@mrmomsworld.com.

I look forward to giving my support to the newly elected members of this Board and continuing to get to know some of the existing members.

I am a lover of life and love to learn from others. I love a good laugh with others and at my own expense. My motto is "life is way too short". I have been blessed with the four most beautiful daughters and I now have the handsomest three boys imaginable. I look forward to our paths crossing and sharing our stories. Until then be all you can be, dream what you dare and live every day as if it's your last.

I am Mr. Mom and this is my world.

### Interior Report by Marcy Perron

The Interior Region has reported they have all had a great summer and are back to work starting up their monthly local meetings and partnership meetings. The one area we will be concentrating on this fall and winter is fundraising. This will be a challenge for all associations this year as we are trying to help support as many foster families as possible to attend the International Foster Care Organization (IFCO) Conference being held in Victoria next year.

We continue to provide courses for foster parents to assist with their education programs. We will also continue our support to foster parents when needed.

It is probably timely to remind all foster parents that your Locals are made up of hard working sincere and supportive "Volunteers" who want only to make your job easier. Taking

an hour or two once a month to attend a monthly meeting would not only show that you appreciate the efforts being made on your behalf but also allow you to set up a supportive network within the fostering community. Only other foster parents understand the type of stress we live with on a daily basis. Having a strong supportive network of Foster Parents may not make this job any easier but it will remind us that we are not alone. It will give you someone you can talk to, who will understand your challenges, who may be able to offer advice or may just be someone who will listen with a sympathetic ear because they've been there themselves.

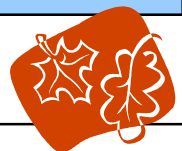
Remember, for us to be able to do our jobs and take care of our children to the best of our ability, we need to be strong and healthy both physically and mentally ourselves. Having a strong network working with you will help make this happen.

Take advantage of your Local's meetings, make friends and stay healthy.

#### Read Carefully Before Signing

We caution caregivers to CAREFULLY read and understand your contract or modifications to that contract before signing.

Once it is signed it is difficult to have it changed, and you may find yourself out of pocket.



## Cloverdale Paint

offers helpful money-saver  
discounts for BCFFPA Members!

**With these great savings you can't  
afford *not* to spruce up your home!**

Call the BCFFPA Provincial office for details  
about how to get your discount

*Stay Safe—Scam Alert!* The Season of Giving is upon us. We have received information from Lower Mainland residents stating that they are receiving phone calls on behalf of BCFFPA requesting donations. Please be aware that the Provincial office does not solicit funds in this manner. Please ensure that you confirm the legitimacy of all telephone solicitation requests before donating.



## Join BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations for our Annual General Meeting 2011 at Victoria's Historical Hotel

We are thrilled to announce that ***The Fairmont Empress*** ~ the Grande Dame of Hotels in Victoria's beautiful downtown harbor ~ will be hosting *BCFFPA's 2011 Annual General Meeting*. Room blocks have been reserved at the very reasonable rate. If you need more room for your travel partners, room rates in all classes have been reduced for our members ~ just say you're coming for the BCFFPA Annual General Meeting!

Where: The Fairmont Empress Hotel  
721 Government Street  
Victoria, BC

When: July 9th, 2011

Event: Morning Annual General Meeting  
Evening Banquet



Stay tuned for more information in the coming months. If you have questions in the meantime, please contact Lea Ann or Jayne at the BCFFPA Provincial Office. 1-800-663-9999



Join us in the luxurious Crystal Ballroom for our Annual General Meeting and Evening Banquet. We look forward to seeing you there! *Extend your stay for the IFCO Conference which begins the next day...just remember to carry over your room booking.*



*Pssst! Big Savings for you!*



### An Additional Everyday Deal for Members of BCFFPA!

The Fairmont Empress has generously extended to us a special off-season rate for foster parents who are members of BCFFPA. If you are travelling to Victoria or live nearby and need a weekend escape between October 1st and April 30th, stay at the Empress with significant discounts on their Fairmont and Fairmont Gold room prices. Contact us for information on our special rates and how to process your booking!

## Regional Delegate Reports Cont.

### Northern Regional Report by Sherrie Jones

I hope that all had a enjoyable summer and you are now getting schedules and routines back in place. Summers are wonderful, but a very busy time so I look forward to fall, school, scheduled child activities and the return of routines.

In terms of support, it has been a very quiet summer for me with few calls from Foster Parents. There does however remain the question around contracts. Contracts of varying lengths are being offered to Foster Parent. This fluctuates greatly from office to office. I have taken this matter to BCFFPA and MCFD Liaison to be addressed.

Partnership meetings have been on hold for the summer in Dawson Creek, and are expected to resume in October. With October being Foster Family Appreciation Month I am sure that there will be many planned events to show Foster Parents that they are truly Appreciated for the wonderful job that they do. Fostering is one of the most rewarding jobs that we choose to work at. All Foster Parents should be very proud of the impact that we have had on our children and youth, and you need to take pride in all their accomplishments.

I encourage all Foster Parents to enjoy the Appreciation activities that are offered in your communities. These events also allow Foster Parents to meet, communicate and network with each other. A strong network at times can be very beneficial to of us.

Axis continues to provide training and support to all Foster Parents in the North. Axis is offering Foster Parent Orientation in Dawson Creek this month in partnership with MCFD.

I am trying to establish a list of Foster Parents in all communities that are offering to be support workers for other Foster Parents. Willie Neil is a support worker for Prince George-Quesnel area. If you are willing to be a support person in your area please contact myself or the BCFFPA office with your name and phone number. Having a resource list of available support persons in various areas will enable me to pass info on to other Foster parents when required.

In closing I would like to thank each and every Foster Parent for sharing your homes, lives and families with the children and youth of our Province during a difficult

time in their lives. Foster Families put their hearts and souls into making a difference in their foster childrens' lives and can not be thanked enough for the hard work that they do every day!!!

#### GUIDELINE TO THE FAMILY CARE RATE 2009\*

| Basic Foster Care Costs | Ages 0-11yrs  | Ages 12-19 yrs |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Monthly</b>          |               |                |
| Food                    | 135.04        | 183.35         |
| Housing                 | 149.51        | 183.35         |
| Transportation          | 67.52         | 76.89          |
| Personal Needs          | 14.46         | 17.74          |
| Recreation              | 33.78         | 35.50          |
| Clothing                | 81.98         | 94.63          |
| <b>Sub-total</b>        | <b>482.29</b> | <b>591.46</b>  |

| Additional Family Care Costs     | Ages 0-11yrs  | Ages 12-19 yrs |
|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Education                        | 25.72         | 31.85          |
| Babysitting                      | 86.81         | 57.33          |
| Transportation                   | 61.09         | 60.51          |
| Personal Spending                | 41.79         | 54.14          |
| Gifts/ Activities                | 61.09         | 60.51          |
| Equipment/ Recreation            | 45.03         | 54.15          |
| Sub-total                        | 321.53        | 318.49         |
| <b>Total Monthly Maintenance</b> | <b>803.82</b> | <b>909.95</b>  |

\*The amounts in each category are estimates of what is required for most children. Actual costs will vary between categories, with some caregivers spending more in some categories but less in others. The total amounts should be sufficient to cover the actual costs for most children.

#### The Relief Foster Care Rates

|                                            |         |
|--------------------------------------------|---------|
| Restricted (for a child aged 0 to 11 yrs)  | \$36.79 |
| Restricted (for a child aged 12 to 19 yrs) | \$40.33 |
| Regular (for a child aged 0 to 11 yrs)     | \$36.79 |
| Regular (for a child aged 12 to 19 yrs)    | \$40.33 |
| Level 1 (all ages)                         | \$55.60 |
| Level 2 (all ages)                         | \$68.35 |
| Level 3 (all ages)                         | \$90.89 |

## CFFA Report

by Louise Dol

I am the new BCFFPA Director to CFFA. The 2010 CFFA AGM was held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Some of the items discussed at the AGM were:

1. Every Child Matters Project
2. Fundraising: Telemarketing and thank you letters distributed
3. IFCO 2011 in July 2011, Victoria B.C.
4. National Working Group Projects information
5. October Board Meeting taking place September 30th to October 3rd at James River Camp, Alberta
6. Provincial and Territories updates
7. Website: Visits increasing, search engine improvements to be done
8. Proxy votes: Criteria and if they can be held by another province.

### Motions Carried

- A. Revised Policy and Procedures dated March 2010 were approved.
- B. By-laws dated March 2010 be approved.
- C. Accepted minutes from last meeting as amended.

### Policy Committee

- Clarify role of Adviser
- Make changes to Policy and By-laws
- Look at Proxy Vote criteria



### Foster Family Month Event!

**On October 28, 2010**

**BCFFPA will hold an afternoon open house**

**JOIN US in the Provincial Office**

**from noon to 4 pm**

## Donations to BCFFPA Support Foster Families

There are many kinds of donations—time, gifts-in-kind, resources, supplies, bequeathments and of course, the gift of money through one-time, monthly or annual programs. In tough economic times family finances are stretched to the limit. Foster parents feel the burden of rising prices, increasing taxes and of course their children's needs are always foremost in their minds. Our regional delegates and executive members of our Board of Directors are frequently being called upon to offer support within their areas, often driving long distances to meet with foster parents and social workers. We are hearing that, among other challenges in the lives of today's foster parents, they are using their savings to support the activities that foster children take part in because the Ministry contracts simply cannot be stretched far enough to cover the costs.

Please put the word out in your communities, to individuals and businesses, that BCFFPA is seeking donations to put towards the *Camp for Kids* program in 2011. We continue to run this program whether or not

we have donations, but the more we have to offer to the community of foster children, the more children will be able to attend. We are hoping to provide foster parents with financial assistance for the camp registration fees and, if we can bring in some donations of sleeping bags and flashlights, (or other camping-related gear) we can send the young people off to camp in style!



### GET IT IN WRITING!



When agreements are made for the coverage of excess costs related to your role as a Caregiver (ie. agreement for extra respite coverage due to your needs, or payment for special travel related to the child). Get it in writing from MCFD prior to incurring the expense, so that the original intent of the agreement cannot be misconstrued or forgotten leaving you out of pocket for the expense.





**Ministry of Children and Family Development**  
**AND**  
**The British Columbia Federation of Foster Parent Associations**

**~ Foster Parent Rights ~**

- Whereas** we wish to acknowledge the special role foster parents have as caregivers for vulnerable children
- Whereas** we wish to acknowledge that the relationship between them, built on mutual respect, deserves recognition
- Whereas** the residence that foster parents share with the children and youth of British Columbia is exclusively their private residence
- Whereas** the Foster Parent Rights document and statements therein is not intended to create, infringe, amend, or change existing or future legal responsibilities or duties whether by statute or contract
- Whereas** we agree that, from time to time, we will meet to discuss the relationship between us and will do so with regard to the stated rights in this document and may seek to amend these rights by mutual agreement
- Whereas** we recognize the paramount consideration is the safety and well being of the child
1. The right to continuing professional development opportunities with respect to caring for children, and to participation in professional foster parent associations.
  2. The right to be consulted and be able to have meaningful input into decisions affecting the foster parents home, family and other placement(s) in the home.
  3. The right to be involved in the development of the child's plan of care and informed of changes to the plan.
  4. The right to limit access to private spaces within their own home, to special possessions, and to private or personal conversations, in the same way their own children are limited.
  5. The right to refuse a placement if they feel they cannot meet the child's needs regardless of the home level.
  6. The right to be able to continue to participate in cultural, social and religious activities of their choosing, while honouring rights, values and beliefs of the foster child.
  7. The right to be considered as a permanent family for a child, along with all other suitable homes if the Director determines that a permanent plan is in the child's best interest.
  8. If requested and permitted by legislation, the right to be provided with notification of the serious illness, injury, or death of a former long-term placement, when this information is known.
  9. The right to receive available information for the care of the child, including, but not limited to, any history of violence or illegal activity, as well as medical, educational, behavioural, personal care and relevant family information in addition to guardianship, custody and access arrangements. In the case of an emergency placement, information is received as soon as possible.
  10. The right to be provided as soon as possible with reasons when a child is removed from a foster parent's home.
  11. The right to be informed of standards expected by ministry staff and consequences of not meeting the standards.
  12. The right to access information contained in any and all documents related to themselves which are held in the Director's custody, subject to all relevant legislation.
  13. The right to access support of their choosing, and the right to be assisted in contacting the British Columbia Federation of Foster Parent Associations, the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents, or any other support provider or agency on any issues concerning, but not limited to, Child in Care Standards and Conflict Resolution.
  14. The right to be provided with reasons an agreement is terminated or suspended and the right to appeal the decision.
  15. The right to be treated with consideration, trust, honesty, respect, acceptance, and fairness in all circumstances by ministry staff and community service providers and the right to request the ministry's assistance when situations arise that involve verbal or physical abuse of the foster parent by a child or youth in care or their family members.
  16. The right to be informed of their Rights and the regional process or protocol for resolving differences or disagreements between the ministry and foster parents.
  17. The right to receive services to support and stabilize a placement.
  18. The right to be provided with access to support services when placements are terminated to minimize the foster parents' feelings of disruption and grief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
HONOURABLE MARY POLAK  
MINISTER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
MELANIE FILIATRAULT  
PRESIDENT, BRITISH COLUMBIA FEDERATION  
OF FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS

## ~ Rights of Children and Youth in Care ~

In December of 2008 The Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks released a handbook about the rights of youth in care. This handbook is titled *Your Life – Your Rights* and it explains the rights of youth in care in a youth friendly manner. It also provides a list of services available to these youth. The rights of children and youth in care in BC are as follows:

- To be fed, clothed and nurtured according to community standards and to be given the same quality of care as other children in the placement
- To be informed about their plans of care
- To be consulted and to express their views, according to their abilities, about significant decision affecting them
- To reasonable privacy and to possession of their personal belongings
- To be free from corporal punishment
- To be informed of the standard of behavior expected by their caregivers and of the consequences of not meeting their caregivers' expectations
- To receive medical and dental care when required
- To participate in social and recreational activities if available and appropriate and according to their abilities and interests
- To receive the religious instruction and to participate in the religious activities of their choice
- To receive guidance and encouragement to maintain their cultural heritage
- To be provided with an interpreter if language of disability is a barrier to consulting with them on decisions affecting their custody or care
- To privacy during discussions with members of their families, subject to subsection
- To privacy during discussions with a lawyer, the Child, Youth and Family Advocate, the Ombudsman, a member of Parliament
- To be informed about and to be assisted in contacting the Child, Youth and Family Advocate
- To be informed of their rights under this Act and the procedures available

Contact the Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks for more information about *Your Life—Your Rights* booklet.  
1-800-565-8055



**Everyone's got rights!**



# Who pioneered the study of how children learn?

## A Tribute to MARIA MONTESSORI (1870-1952)

by Peter Dueck

October is set aside to recognize foster parents in BC. This is a worthy recognition because it gives the Ministry and our communities the opportunity to say 'thanks'. It is also great because there is usually food involved and you get to hang-out with all your 'foster' friends! Dina and I look forward to this event every year. There are of course many others who deserve equal recognition for their expertise and commitment - social workers, doctors, therapists and educators, to mention a few.

Then there are the heroes and pioneers of the past...like Maria Montessori. Remembered in our family partly because our 5 year-old attends (thanks to a scholarship) the most amazing kindergarten, Oakridge Montessori. Also remembered because of Maria's largely unrecognized contribution to the learning of children who struggle with school.



Maria Montessori was an Italian physician, educator and thinker. She was Italy's first woman doctor who's first job was to work with special needs children in a

mental hospital. The staff was instructed to speak to the children with respect, and the children were provided with purposeful activities, including learning to care for themselves, and educational pursuits. She described these children as 'unhappy little ones', and the 'unteachable'; *children who, today, would likely be in foster care.* Maria came to understand that typical children as well as children with special needs, achieve more and are happiest in a self-directed learning setting. Maria designed visual, practical learning aides and cast the teacher in the role of a guide.

Maria Montessori pioneered the approach that "...education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process...acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment."

You might wonder why this individualistic, self-paced method is reserved largely for children from privileged families! Who knows? What is clear is

that relatively few public schools in North America use the Montessori method. One would think that with the level of integration in our system that this method would be advantageous. Perhaps we need to lobby for a school which specializes in the education of children with challenges like FASD, using the Montessori method.

Thank-you Maria for helping us to think about learning as largely defined by children and not adults.



# IFCO 2011 is Coming to Canada!

*And You're All Invited!*



## XVII Biennial 2011 IFCO World Conference

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada  
July 10th through 15th, 2011

**Theme: Fostering Hope ...  
Together, we can make a difference.**

**What you can expect:**  
An Exciting Youth Program  
An Outstanding Adult Program  
Excellent Networking Opportunities  
A Warm Welcome in Beautiful Victoria  
and a Truly Memorable Experience

**Website & Contact Information:**  
<http://www.ifco2011.com> email to [info@ifco2011.com](mailto:info@ifco2011.com)

**Call for Papers, Registration, and  
Travel & Accommodation Information  
will be available in mid-July 2011 on our  
website at <http://www.ifco2011.com>**



Haa Haa Pa by aa aats'ik Ray Sim, Sr:  
The original Aboriginal Artwork proudly displayed here was created by  
Gibson/Musqueam artist, Ray Sim Sr., especially for IFCO 2011. It is titled  
"Haa Haa Pa" which is a Nuu-chah-nulth term for "teaching". Ray's  
traditional name is oo-poots-ik.  
The Eagle is a very important spiritual animal to the First Nations people  
of the Northwest Coast; it is generally a symbol of power, intelligence  
and loyalty. Eagle down represents peace and friendship.

IFCO 2011 FOUNDING FUNDERS: Adoption & Permanency Trust Fund / Victoria Foundation

IFCO 2011 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE © 2010



## **"I'm baaack..." The recycled child & family welfare advocate returns.**

by Jayne Wilson (aka Cotter, Cotter-Kathwaroon or "C-W")

You may have heard, and I'm happy to confirm for those who may be wondering, I am back at BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations. For those of you who don't know me, I found my way to a passionate interest in the foster/adoption field through what started out as a volunteer position at the Adoptive Families Association of BC—a wonderful group of mostly adoptive parents who introduced me to the world of BC's children in foster care.

On a personal note, I have spent 13 years parenting a young man who helps me to understand the challenges I inflicted upon my own mother! I also have 2 teenage stepsons and one adult step-daughter. Before my son was born, I learned about inclusiveness and that family can take many forms from my stepdaughter who called me "Mom" from the day I met her not long after her 21st birthday! From my past several years of parenting experience I am now a firm believer that you can feel as though you have too few children but never too many.

Coming from a background richly rooted in the suburban hard-working middle-class ideal, I had little exposure to the varieties of circumstances that would lead children to be raised within the child welfare system. Thankfully life has a way of providing opportunities to enrich our perspectives with meaningful work and purpose.

In my previous tenure at BCFFPA, I was intrigued by the amazing character that is evident in all of the foster parents I have had the good fortune to meet. You're a resilient, creative, caring group of people and I admire your dedication to your "calling" (as I recently heard a Board member of the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents refer to the work of fostering). I believe a calling is the most accurate description of the choice to be a foster parent as, over my time here, I have spoken with many a foster mom or dad who are providing a level of care and support that only a small portion of the population of adult caregivers would willingly take on.

In previous years I have watched a foster mother tenderly care for a medically fragile young one, I have participated in weekly check-ins with a foster mother who was advocating for a child who had been removed from her home—a boy no longer in her care, and yet she was still fighting for his welfare. I have spoken to both moms and dads who are seeking compensation for the damage done to their home by a foster child still in their care—and yet what strikes me every time is that the reality of loss is tempered somehow by the compassion and understanding they have for the depth of pain and trauma in a child or youth's history. Foster parents are matter-of-fact people. They have experiences of loss, disappointment, anger (and of course joy) but at the most challenging moments they have the ability to put a child's needs before their own feelings and carry on with the business of the day; supporting the kids they are tasked with caring for and providing a safe, loving home.

Due to the unfortunate illness of our previous Executive Director, I have accepted the position in order to continue the good work of the BCFFPA. I will do my best to advocate for our Mission (to support all foster parents to provide quality in-home care), hold to our Vision (supporting children and youth to reach their full potential through excellence in foster care) and adhere to our Belief that *resilient foster parents equal empowered children and youth*. I can't imagine a more important goal than providing children with the opportunities to become successful, responsible, caring individuals. This begins with the kindness of adults who open their home and provide a model of what home and family are for a young person who may never have experienced love, consistency or safety.

So yes, I'm back. I'm here to work with and for these "professional parents" who I admire so much and by way of supporting these giving parents, to know that the young people who are raised in foster care homes are provided with kind, consistent care. For many children and youth, this may be the only time they have experienced a safe and supportive environment. Of course some of these children will need lifelong support and advocacy. But for a precious few, they will gain the experiences necessary to give them the tools to create healthy relationships and make the positive choices necessary for an independent and successful future.

I'm happy to be back in my chair. I look forward to meeting new people and to reconnecting with those who I've worked with previously. Thank you everyone for the warm welcome wishes I've received.

### **2011 Early Membership Renewal Draw**

**Send in your membership renewal to BCFFPA  
Provincial office postdated on or before  
November 30th, 2010 and you will be entered  
into a draw for this year's gift, an i-Pod Touch.**



**'IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER'**

Please complete & return to: **BCFFPA 207-22561 Dewdney Trunk Road, Maple Ridge, V2X 3K1**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ P/C: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Association \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Foster Home: (tick one) Restricted \_\_\_\_ Regular \_\_\_\_ Level I \_\_\_\_ Level II \_\_\_\_ Level III \_\_\_\_ Contractor \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

This is a: **New Membership** \_\_\_\_ (OR) a **Renewal** \_\_\_\_ .

**1 year:** individual \$30.00 \_\_\_\_ OR couple \$35.00 \_\_\_\_

**2 year:** individual \$50.00 \_\_\_\_ OR couple \$60.00 \_\_\_\_

\*\$10.00 of this membership fee will be used by the provincial body for administration of the program and development of services to foster parents. The balance of the fee will be returned to your region or local association.

I/we contract with (i.e. delegated agency regional agency MCFD etc.) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ OR my affiliation with the BCFFPA is (i.e. staff, MCFD, non-foster parent): \_\_\_\_\_. As members of the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations, I/we agree to abide by the By-laws, Policy and Procedures, and Code of Ethics of the Federation. \_\_\_\_\_

[signature(s)]

Please bill my VISA \_\_\_\_ M/C \_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

**BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations**

#207-22561 Dewdney Trunk

Maple Ridge BC

V2X 3K1