

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations

FosterlineBC



Fall 2014
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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations
3rd Floor
131 Eighth Street
New Westminster, BC V3M 3P6

E-mail: office@bcfosterparents.ca

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BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations

Provincial Office
3rd Floor
131 Eighth Street
New Westminster, BC V3M 3P6

Toll Free: 1-800-663-9999
Fax: 604-544-1110
E-mail: office@bcfosterparents.ca
Website: www.bcfosterparents.ca

Provincial Staff:

Executive Director	Jayne Wilson jayne@bcfosterparents.ca
Administration/Finance	Ronda Sweeney ronda@bcfosterparents.ca
Membership	Tanya Taylor tanya@bcfosterparents.ca

Board of Directors:

President	Russell Pohl Coast Fraser
Vice President	Tamara Smith Coast Fraser
Treasurer	Marcy Perron Interior
Secretary	Rocky Hindmarch North
Regional Delegates:	
Vancouver Coastal	Monica Buchanan
Interior	Yvonne Langlois
North	Amanda Lindquist
Vancouver Island	Vacant

For Board of Directors contact information, please call the Provincial office.

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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** is a quarterly publication.

**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

I am so blessed to have the role that I now do. Over the last few months I have been able to meet more of you. From our AGM in Prince George, through to meetings and of course in my role as advocate liaison I have continued to learn from you, our foster parents.

I am always amazed at the stories that you share about the lives you live with your families. The time you invest, the wisdom you share and of course the love you spread. In our role as foster parents we touch many lives—from our children, to our foster children and their families to those who work in the agencies.

Foster parents possess so many qualities, ones that give us the ability to take on almost anything. We are resilient, versatile and of course unique. Children in our care often do not recognize that what we do is for them—that not necessarily in the immediate future but possibly when they need it the most, they will remember something from their time with us. They are often mad, hurt, disconnected, beaten and broken, yet we continue. We pick them up and move on. We heal, we fix and we love. We are foster parents.

Sometimes our batteries are not recharged as soon as they should be and we trudge on anyway. Often we need someone to pick us up as well but we keep moving. Our role of caring for children sometimes supersedes our own needs yet we persevere in order to be that someone who will make a difference in the life a child.

I, with our Board of Directors cannot begin to tell you how much we appreciate what you do. We know the value of your service and the depth of your commitment and dedication. We are foster parents too and we work hard to make a difference, not only in the lives of children, but in the lives of caregivers as well.

As we approach Foster Family Appreciation Month, we should take the time to think about all that we do. We should acknowledge other foster parents for the challenges that we all work through and the wonderful things that we do for others all the time.

I am honored to be the President of BCFFPA. I want to thank you today, tomorrow and all days to follow for your service to the children of British Columbia. From our office, our Board and myself, thank you for all you do. You are amazing!

Happy Foster Family Appreciation Month!

Russell Pohl  
President

### 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

## Notes from the Office

Happy Foster Family Month! This year I'm reflecting on the qualities and skills that make a great foster parent. Determination, openness, generosity, humor, kindness, strength, flexibility, ingenuity, the ability to share and of course, determination. Yes, I said that twice. I don't know of any other career where determination is front and center. You advocate for the kids you care for day in and day out and that takes something akin to pixie dust. Foster parents create miraculous outcomes.

I am in awe of what you can achieve all because you love to parent. And those of you who have been parenting for over 20, 30 and 40 years, I can't even imagine how many lives you have shaped in that time. Thank you for the work you do and I am happy to support that work in my own humble way, parked at my desk usually, pumping out the paperwork or speaking with a foster parent on the phone who is experiencing some challenges and who just needs an ear. You do tremendous work, manifesting magic every day and you don't receive nearly the recognition you deserve.

This is the first FosterlineBC newsletter that will be distributed almost entirely by e-mail. I'm a bit nervous about it, in fact, because we don't have e-mail addresses for every foster parent in the province. For this issue we'll be e-mailing our membership list and relying on the Ministry offices and the agencies to forward the issue. Very shortly however, we'll be calling every foster parent who we don't have on our membership list to collect current information and create a database which will be updated quarterly. Please bear with us during this process. E-mailing our newsletters will save over \$10,000 every year in paper and postage. We'd rather be putting that money into supports for foster parents!

On October 1st we're kicking off Foster Family Month with an office Open House to showcase our new space. We reside in a grand old manor with historical significance to New Westminster, though our space isn't nearly as grand as the grounds and the rest of the building. We will be hosting a limited number of people due to space limitations, but our video project producer will be there capturing footage of our visitors. Stay tuned for glimpses of our office in upcoming videos. Check out our current topics and MCFD's Foster Family Month messages at [www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa](http://www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa)!

Once again—best wishes for the month ahead!

Jayne Wilson  
Executive Director



**FosterlineBC**  
**1-800-663-9999**  
**...for information, support  
and referral**



**MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE STEPHANIE CADIEUX**  
**MINISTER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**



In British Columbia, the month of October is dedicated as Foster Family Month in order to recognize and honour the dedication, hard work and contributions of foster families across the province. As such, I am pleased to announce the proclamation of Foster Family Month 2014, the 24th year the province has marked this event.

Being a foster parent or guardian can be both incredibly challenging and extremely rewarding as vulnerable children and youth needing emergency, temporary or permanent care, receive support, stability, and a safe place to live and thrive. Foster families provide a safe haven to children and youth during difficult times in their young lives.

I know that every day British Columbia's caring and compassionate foster parents who do this important work rely on the vital support your Federation provides. During the month of October, please join me in recognizing the role of foster families to children, youth and communities.

On behalf of the Government of British Columbia, I would like to thank you for everything you do to make a difference in the lives of children and youth.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Cadieux  
Minister

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Ministry of  
Children and Family  
Development

Office of the  
Minister

Mailing Address:  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

Location:  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria



5221-223<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Langley, B.C.  
V2Y 1L5  
Phone: (604) 530-1744  
Email: [sdurnford@telus.net](mailto:sdurnford@telus.net)

September, 2014

### CELEBRATING B.C. FOSTER FAMILIES

During the month of October, BC Foster Families will be recognized for their work throughout the year.

On behalf of the Canadian Foster Family Association (CFFA), I would like to send best wishes to the foster families of British Columbia.

Other Provinces and Territories will be celebrating during National Foster Family Week; the third full week of October (Oct. 19 – 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

It is because of foster families such as yours that foster children are able to have a safe, caring and nurturing home environment while they are not able to live with their own families.

Thank you for your dedication, commitment and caring of the children and youth who you open your homes and hearts to.

I hope you are able to attend the special events planned in your community to celebrate and be thanked officially for the work you do throughout the year.

Sheila Durnford  
President,  
Canadian Foster Family Association

# BCFFPA AGM 2015 heads to Whistler Village

Look Here!  
➡

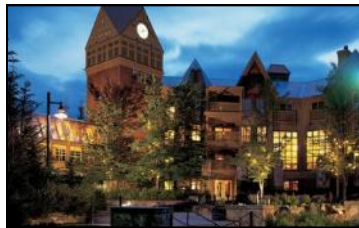
**MCFD SPONSORING  
FOSTER PARENTS TO ATTEND  
AGM 2015!**

**May 22 and 23, 2015**

Join BCFFPA's Board of Directors and staff in beautiful Whistler Village next spring for our Annual General Meeting and Conference. We have negotiated very reasonable rates at Hilton Whistler Resort & Spa! Spend an afternoon wandering the village shops or take the gondola to the top of the mountain. There's so much to do and see, we hope you don't forget to attend the workshops or the banquet!



Back by popular demand are the Banquet Evening Dance and our Friday night Wellness Room where our guests can enjoy refreshments by the patio campfire and relax with a foot massage.



We're mixing it up a bit in 2015 by spreading out our Camp for Kids fundraisers with a 50/50 draw during the workshop day lunch hour, the bucket draw on Friday night at the Wellness Room and our ever popular auction, hosted by ICS's Kari Beppe, on Saturday at the Banquet.

Our room block is now in place for reservations. Book soon to ensure you receive the foster parent rate!

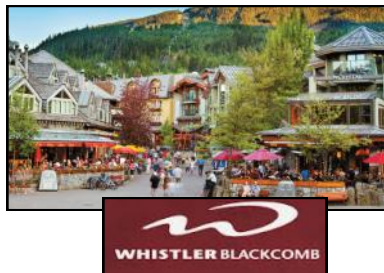
Hilton Room (2 double beds) **or** King Junior Suite — \$135/night  
Underground parking is available at the reduced rate of \$15/day.

*Please be sure to specify the event name **Foster Parents** when reserving to access negotiated rates.*

**Ph: 604-932-1982 or toll free at 1-800-515-4050.**

**E-mail: [reservations@hiltonwhistler.com](mailto:reservations@hiltonwhistler.com)**

Individual reservations must be guaranteed with a credit card or advance deposit. The Hilton will accept cancellation of guest



reservations up to **14 days** prior to arrival.

Stay tuned for more information.  
We hope to see you in Whistler in May 2015!

We've received confirmation that MCFD will provide funds to BCFFPA in order to support foster parents to attend the AGM in Whistler next year. Each Service Delivery Area will assist 2 foster parents from the region to attend. The bursaries will cover AGM registration fees plus a \$200 cheque provided at the event. *This opportunity is open to all BC caregivers, regardless of membership or affiliation with BCFFPA.*

Stay tuned for details and a call for bursary applications to be included in the Spring newsletter!

## BCFFPA Membership Early Renewal Draw 2014

Renew or take out a new membership with BCFFPA between October 1st and December 1st and you are entered to win a free registration at our Whistler AGM 2015! That's a \$350 value and a fabulous weekend with friends.



## We asked, and caregivers said...

We've recently sent out some surveys to gather information from our members. Here are some of the results.

### Have you attended a BCFFPA AGM in the past 4 years?

70% said yes, 30% said no

### Do you expect to attend AGM 2015 in Whistler?

53% said yes, 11% said no, 36% said maybe

### Do you prefer half day or whole day workshops?

32% indicated they did not have a preference  
28% preferred a half day seminar  
19% prefer whole day workshops  
21% had no preference

### How often do you take time away from fostering to do some 'self care'?

32% said a bit of time every day, 14% take some time once a week, 11% said more than once per week, 18% said rarely or never, 25% were somewhere in between



## BC Foster Basics Video Series

Brought to you by BCFFPA

As of mid-September, we have completed 7 videos covering a variety of foster-related topics. There are many more to come. The videos are hosted on our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa](http://www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa). We hope you take the time to watch! They are available 24/7.

We've asked some of BC's foster parents and support agency professionals to facilitate the topics. You may see some faces you recognize!



### Read Your Contracts Carefully Before Signing

We caution caregivers to CAREFULLY read and understand your contract or modifications to the contract before signing. Ask all your questions FIRST! Once you have signed it is difficult to have it changed, and you may find yourself out of pocket.

### Tickets to Events for BC Foster Parents

BC foster parents can receive tickets to events through *Kids Up Front Foundation*. To be placed on the mailing list e-mail the Provincial office at [office@bcfosterparents.ca](mailto:office@bcfosterparents.ca) or Debbie Drewitz at [debbiedrewitz@gmail.com](mailto:debbiedrewitz@gmail.com)



## Extended Property Damage (Rider) Insurance

by Jayne Wilson

BCFFPA is now receiving claims from foster caregivers for accidental damages done by foster children. This increased coverage applies to damages done January 31, 2014 or after.

The Ministry is still responsible for deductibles and the cost of damages that are under your own insurance policy deductible amount (*generally \$500*).

For those who need a refresher about the policy details, the claim process or other aspects of the Rider program as it is currently delivered, please watch the online workshop available through our website home page. BCFFPA won't be touring to delivery more workshops in the immediate future.

### Rider Insurance Claim Statistics

We have reviewed 3 years worth of claims to assess what the most common damages are. We thought our caregivers might find them interesting.

- 30% of claims are damages to walls
- 16% are damages to doors
- 15% are damages to carpet
- 12% are theft  
(debit cards, money, bikes, cell phones, electronics and jewelry)
- 11% are damages done to flooring  
(urine, burn marks, feces, paint, felt pen)
- 8% are damages to electronics (including computers and TVs)
- 6% are broken windows
- 2% are damages caused by blood stains

### Extended Health Care Packages by Canada Financial

Canada Financial's Ian Bideshi is available to put together individual extended health benefit insurance packages for foster parents. Currently he is offering a 10% discount for foster parents who utilize Canada Financial's services.

Ian has helped over 110 foster parents and has saved them thousands of dollars over the past 15 years. Canada Financial also offers segregated funds which have some guarantees for your investments.

Contact Ian at 604-862-4262 for more information.

## Caregiver Support Networks – Update

MCFD is on track to have 11 Caregiver Support Networks established in 9 communities in early October, 2014. Support Home contractors have been identified and orientation sessions are underway for the Networks over the next few weeks. Dawson Creek has joined Chilliwack in deciding to set up 2 Networks.



Approximately 62 foster caregivers are participating in this new model and the Networks are as diverse as the province. They are in rural and urban communities, and they focus on age groups (teens, middle years and pre-schoolers), Safe Babies, relief homes, and trauma informed practice. Some include all caregivers in a geographic area.

This has been an extraordinary collaborative journey involving local foster caregivers, Ministry staff and community service agencies. The work intensified in August and September as communities solicited and evaluated applications for Support Homes and preparations were made to provide the orientation sessions.

One of the key reasons for setting up Caregiver Support Networks is to support caregiver engagement and retention. The next steps will involve making sure the Networks get off to a good start and the members are helped during the first year as they settle in as a team, build strong relationships within their communities and participate in periodic evaluations to gauge their development.

### ANNOUNCING BCFFPA'S NEWEST DELEGATE FOR THE NORTH REGION—**Amanda Lindquist**

Over the summer, the Board of Directors welcomed Amanda Lindquist to the North Delegate role. She succeeds Rocky Hindmarch in the role as he has moved into the position of Secretary.

Amanda is licensed ECE, has operated her own daycare centre and has been a preschool teacher for 4 years. She has been fostering since she was 22 and has a strong passion for children and families.

Amanda understands the unique struggles associated with living in the north as she grew up in small northern towns from Houston to Chetwynd. Currently Amanda and her partner foster for Carrier Sekani Family Services.

Welcome, Amanda!





## Delegate Regional Reports

### Coast Fraser Report—Monica Buchanan

Attempting to connect with locals immediately following summer break has presented some challenges amplified by the teachers' strike. But I expect that moving into the Fall communication should improve because local area representatives will get back into routines with children back in school and holidays behind us.

*Marie Murdoch reported that in Mission.....*

Things have been quiet over the summer, what with a lot of social workers away on holidays, others just covering for them but it will normalize now that most are back on track. They had a protocol investigation in one of their homes that resulted in the CIC withdrawing their statement (saying she lied) after it was over. The family experienced a 3-month roller coaster and are now hopeful of clearing their name with RCMP. MCFD does not appear to have a process in place to assist foster parents with this when a claim has been disproven or withdrawn.

There is an increase in youth agreements for 18 year olds. Some foster homes are being asked to take a youth as a renter or room and board situation, which leaves uncertain the implications for foster homes. That is, with room and board liability would be a huge concern as the youth is not placed under a family care home agreement. Additional issues include liability and Rider insurance (no coverage under either in this case) and a concern regarding whether or not rental income is reportable by the home on income tax; and for protocols if there are allegations surrounding the youth. Foster homes having these youths placed on youth agreements are put in a vulnerable position. Mission wants to know if this is an issue for other areas and how is the problem been dealt with.

There are also challenges with contracts as contracts are being modified to end on the day the placement leaves, with no "60 day notice" prior to the child leaving. A "modification agreement" is being done up and caregivers are being asked to sign. This is not consistent with every home or with every placement in the same home. Although when one foster parent challenged MCFD on this practice and pointed out that her contract wording did not specify that she would not receive notice, she was provided with the usual 60 days notice.

Overall the local is doing fine. They will be hosting more informal foster parent socials in the fall and MCFD is hosting a Foster Parent Appreciation event on October 15th in recognition of Foster Family Month.

*Surrey and Langley.....*

It has been quiet in Surrey and Langley and this is likely resulting from summer break. Albeit, I do not have access to a lot of information sharing in this area primarily resulting from the FVFPA presence in these two communities---Surrey has a local but it is going through some transitions and has not been well supported by FVFPA or the Ministry office in the region.

My goal for the next three months is to meet with the active members and Board members of the Surrey Local to see if we can invigorate more activity and membership interest.

*Chilliwack/Tri-Cities/Burnaby/New Westminster....*

No updates from these Locals as I was unable to connect with these Local representatives.

Partnership meetings held in Vancouver had a summer break and the first fall meeting is set for early October---so no update from this group or happenings in the area.

### North Regional Report—Amanda Lindquist

Hello foster parents! My name is Amanda Lindquist and I am the new Northern Rep. I have only held this position for a short period of time, but I look forward to connecting with more foster parents and new communities!

Thank you to everyone that attended the 2014 AGM in Prince George. It was a success and we saw some big changes voted in to our Provincial Board. I hope to see many of you again next year!

I would like to extend our welcome to the Quesnel BCFFPA Local. They have started up the local this summer and say they are looking forward to future Support and Advocacy training. Rob and Tracy are enthusiastic about being able to provide support for the foster parents that are in need of help and guidance.

We are still holding partnership meetings in Prince George once a month. MCFD, Axis, foster parents, and two Delegated Agencies are invited to attend. We are always open to new faces and input from all sides that are involved in raising our children in care.

Our local BCFFPA in Prince George has also inquired more about Support and Advocacy training, as we are dealing with much of the same reoccurring issues around lack of transitions for our children in care and lack of communication and misunderstandings between MCFD staff and foster parents. That being said, our Executive Director of Service for the North, North East and North Central MCFD, Ed Berry, recognizes the issues that we have. He

says he is working towards reducing the "crisis management " work load and he hopes this will allow staff to have more time for Care Plans and home visits, among other things.

Our summer was great and we had beautiful weather for the annual Foster Family Camp out at Chubb Lake. Prince George also holds foster family support socials every month. For info on this and many other events and workshops please look us up on Facebook : NORTHERN FOSTER PARENTS. This is open to all current foster parents.

Thank you to all our foster families that do this every minute of every day. It is a truly amazing dedication that you have!

Thanks for reading!

### Interior Report—Yvonne Langlois (Macro Board)

The Macro Region Board meets once a month via conference call on a Monday to discuss issues from across the region. Over the next couple of months we will be thinking up ways to fund-raise for the 2015 AGM in Whistler.

The first Caregiver Support Network support homes are going through orientation and hope to have everything ready to for an October start.

Most areas are having partnership meetings with the Ministry every second month. Some have Local Boards that meet once a month.

The Kootenay and surrounding areas will be having a breakfast at the end of the month. They are making plans for a spaghetti fundraiser, as well as a Christmas party for foster families.

Williams Lake/100 Mile Local president has stepped down. Williams Lake is looking for a new president to step in, but until then the members will continue to work together. 100 Mile has a new president that has taken on the role.

There are walk in clinics for Mental Health being set up to open soon.

The Salmon Arm/Enderby/Ravelstoke area will be working on fundraising for the AGM and Christmas party. The Local Foster Parent Association will be having their meeting soon and are planning a partnership meeting in October. The new rep to the Macro for this region is Heather Bayes.

The North Okanagan and area Local meets once a month and they hold partnership meetings every second month. In September, foster families and Ministry staff enjoyed a barbecue together. In October the Local will hold a Halloween party and they are working on a Christmas party at the local bowling centre.

The Central/South Okanagan will have their first Board meeting of the year. On the agenda is a Christmas party discussion as well as fundraising for the next AGM. The Ministry staff are all moving into one building.

All areas are experiencing a decrease in seasoned foster homes as well as the early retirements of social workers and resource workers. The word is that many will not be replaced. Ministry administrative staff are very stretched. Foster parents are being asked to think outside the box as there is no additional monies available through MCFD.

### Vancouver Island Report—No Delegate

No report available.

### Foster Family Month 2014

There are many foster parent appreciation events and recognition activities taking place across the province this month. It is our sincere hope that everyone will be touched by at least one of them!

BCFFPA's Board of Directors and Staff members **wish you all a wonderful month of celebrations.** Thank you for everything you do and everything you give to BC's children and youth in care. You are shaping the future. BC has a brighter future because of you!



# From Foster Child to Foster Parent—Rheanna's Story

By Jayne Wilson

Rheanna is a lively, engaging, caring young woman who is a mom of three girls ages 16, 6 and 5. She is also a former foster child. Over the past few years, Rheanna and her husband, Travis, have fostered two teen girls.

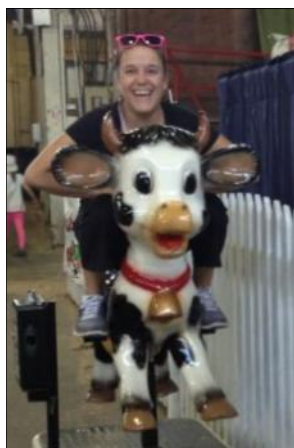
We often hear of foster children becoming foster parents when they are grown. Rheanna may not have intended to foster, but when the opportunity presented itself on two separate occasions, she enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to pass on the care she received herself.

At the age of 8, Rheanna was placed in the care of a newly married couple in their early 20s, David and Judy. Coming from a home that offered little structure, she responded well to the routine set by her new foster parents. Rheanna thrived, attending school regularly, enjoying family dinners, going for family bike rides and attending gymnastics and summer camp. She stayed with David and Judy for a couple of years, until one day she was moved to another foster home. This placement, with a family friend, was also a good experience for her, though in her memory the change was confusing, sudden and certainly unexpected.

In light of the lack of transition to the new placement, I asked Rheanna about her experience of the move to the second foster home. She recalls being shocked. Though she was comfortable with the placement overall, there was no transition and no explanation of why the move took place.

Regardless of how much is now known about the necessity of easing children into transitions and supporting positive attachments, unprepared moves and sudden transitions are still a common occurrence in foster care practice today. Of course there are circumstances where this can't be avoided, but we often hear of children who are moved suddenly for reasons that seem to not always be in their best interests.

Before Rheanna's days in foster care were over, she was back in David and Judy's home for another two years — something she is grateful for. Her years with them cemented an ongoing connection that continues today and extends to Rheanna's husband and children. They live in the same community and see each other often.



Rheanna staying in touch with her inner child

Living on her own at 16, Rheanna gave birth to her first daughter, Brittany at the tender age of 17. In spite of being a new mom at such a young age, she managed to stay in high school and graduate. She pursued an interest in photography—an interest now shared by her oldest daughter. A few years later, Rheanna met Travis and their family grew with the birth of 2 more little girls.

Because of her positive experiences in the foster placements, Rheanna has ensured that her own children are provided with plenty of structure and engaging activity such as horseback riding, swimming, Brownies and Sparks. Taking a lesson from her positive experience with David and Judy, Rheanna insists on eating meals together as a family and she ensures that her kids have homemade nutritious food.

When Rheanna's youngest daughters were still small, the Ministry asked if she and Travis would be able to foster the child of a family friend. They were more than happy to offer Sharon a home and family. At 15, Sharon was failing all of her courses and had just dropped out of high school. With Rheanna's own background of struggling to complete high school after the birth of her daughter, Rheanna offered the critical support needed. After re-enrolling Sharon in high school, Rheanna and Travis provided structure and encouragement, working with Sharon to improve her grades. With the assistance and encouragement she received in Rheanna's home, Sharon eventually graduated from high school on the honor roll. She has since accessed MCFD resources to pursue a post secondary education and lives on a youth agreement through the Ministry. Rheanna considers Sharon her daughter; they talk often and are all together for Sunday family dinners and other events.

A second foster placement came not long ago when Dana was placed with Rheanna's family. Dana was adapting well to the routine and support before she was returned to her birth mom's home. Rheanna feels the return home was premature, however, since there is a family connection, she is able to maintain contact in order to support Dana however possible.

I asked Rheanna about her husband's background and how he's taken to the role of foster parent.

"Travis loves to help people and make sure they're okay," she said. He treats all the kids the same—something that seems to be shared by the extended family who have embraced the girls they've had in their care and consider them family.

***Continued on page 17***



## Foster Parent Support Services Society

"Serving the Foster Parents of the Vancouver Island Region through Support, Networking, Education and on-going Training"

Regional Office: 145-735 Goldstream Ave., Victoria V9B 2X4  
toll free: 1-888-922-8437 fax: 778-430-5463  
websites: [www.fpsss.com](http://www.fpsss.com)



### **Mission Statement**

*The FPSS Society is a Grass Roots organization committed to providing meaningful and accessible support, education and networking services which will continually enhance the skills and abilities of foster parents to deliver the best care possible to the children in their homes.*

The FPSS Society has been contracted by MCFD to provide the following services to foster parents on Vancouver Island. Foster parents can go to [www.fpsss.com](http://www.fpsss.com) to see and download our calendars of current events.

### **Peer Support Groups**

Opportunities for foster parents to network through the development, organization and scheduling of Peer Support Groups, which are meaningful and effective, and best meet the needs of foster parents in the Region.

### **Protocol Support Team**

Support to caregivers involved in protocol processes, including the organization, training and supervision of volunteer support workers.

### **Mentoring Program**

A Mentor is an experienced foster parent who acts as a trusted advisor, friend or support person and reduces the isolation foster parents may experience. The goals of mentoring are to increase the retention rate of foster homes, provide foster parents with a support network and information, and to help prevent placement breakdown.

### **Region-wide Communication**

*The Island Connection* is a comprehensive newsletter, published 5 times per year and mailed to all foster parents free of charge.

### **Area Coordinators**

Area Coordinators are in Victoria, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Comox Valley, Campbell River, and Port Hardy to assist foster parents in obtaining current and accurate information; support services to caregivers including training and development, and peer support.

## **MCFD Team Building Meetings**

Identification, presentation and management of common issues for caregivers.

## **Networking**

The FPSS Society provides opportunities for foster parents to connect with resource/support services in their communities and with other foster parents who share the challenges and benefits of fostering. FPSS works collaboratively with organizations like the BCFFPA, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, and regional support agencies to represent, inform, and support all foster parents on Vancouver Island. FPSS is involved in all Vancouver Island foster parent appreciation events and the Communities of Caring project in Duncan.

## **Workshops and On-going Training**

Opportunities for foster parents to further their skills and knowledge development in areas such as Trauma Informed Care, Attachment, FASD, and Cultural Awareness.

## **BC Foster Care Education Program**

The FPSS Society provides the BCFCE training for all foster parents on Vancouver Island. Classes are offered in Victoria, Cowichan, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Courtenay, Campbell River, and Port Hardy.



### **\*\*Your Feedback is Needed for a Study\*\***

Philipp Svehla, a Fraser Valley foster parent, is conducting a study as part of his UBC thesis project, to learn more about the development of attachment between foster parents and young foster children.

If you are currently fostering a preschool-aged child, or have recently fostered a preschool-aged child, your valuable input is being sought.

For more information, contact Philipp at: [philippsvehla@gmail.com](mailto:philippsvehla@gmail.com) or 604-585-9630. Thanks!

BCFFPA represents *you*, your needs and your day to day practice as a professional caregiver in the province of BC. As a member of BCFFPA you can play a direct role in ensuring that all changes in the province's foster care system are in the best interests of children and the dedicated individuals who care for them day to day. We are currently seeking BCFFPA member foster parents who are active in their fostering communities to be **regional delegates for Vancouver Island and Vancouver Coastal regions**. Please call the provincial office for more information!

## FOSTER FAMILY SUPPORT Vancouver Coastal

The foster support program in the Vancouver Coastal Region is a specialized program that supports caregivers who are contracted with Ministry of Children and Family Development. The program uses a caregiver centered approach; highly skilled individuals work one on one with caregivers to assist them with their unique challenges caring for children in their homes.

### Referral Process

All new foster parents are referred to the Welcome Wagon which includes 3 months of in home support that can be extended upon request.

Resource Workers submit referrals directly to the Foster Family Program Central Referral Table.

Caregivers can submit a request for support services. The request form can be accessed and submitted through Resource Workers or on [www.fosterhub.ca](http://www.fosterhub.ca).

Social Workers can submit a referral for support for an extended family or they can request support on their own behalf. Form can be found on [www.fosterhub.ca](http://www.fosterhub.ca).

### Support Available to Caregiver:

- In-home support/extended family support
- Welcome Wagon for new caregivers
- Tele-support 24 hrs 7 days a week
- Counselling & Therapeutic Intervention
- Clinical Counselling
- Behavioral Support & Planning
- Integrated Case Management
- Protocol Support
- Assistance with Development and Implementation of Safety & Service Plans
- Report Writing Support
- Transitional Support
- 53 hour BC Foster Care Education Program
- Support Groups
- FASD Key Worker
- Foster Parent Website and e-newsletter
- Kids Up Front Program
- Appreciation Events – Christmas Party, Summer BBQ, Appreciation Dinner

- Specialized Training Opportunities – [www.fosterhub.ca](http://www.fosterhub.ca)
- General Inquires 1 (877) 926-1185
- Website: [www.fosterhub.ca](http://www.fosterhub.ca)

The Agencies who provide this support to MCFD caregivers include: Hollyburn Family Services, Family Services of Greater Vancouver and Connexus Child & Children Services. These same services are provided to Vancouver and Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society caregivers by Hollyburn Family Services.

### Upcoming Events

- VACFSS Appreciation Dinner – Oct 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 604-216-6100
- MCFD North Vancouver Foster Parent Appreciation Lunch—Oct 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014 604-904-4300
- Vancouver/Richmond Foster Parent Appreciation Lunch—Oct 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014 604-660-5676
- VACFSS/Vancouver/Richmond/North Shore Christmas Party—Dec 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 1-877-926-1185
- SAVE THE DATE: Stand Together- Caregivers Conference—Coquitlam – March 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### North East Foster Families

Please contact me to receive support or to access training.

#### Service and Support meetings start in September

- Fort St John—Mondays 9-12 @ Community Bridge
- Dawson Creek—1st and 3rd Tuesday lunch group 11-1pm @ MCFD
- Fort Nelson—1st Thursday every month 1-4pm @ MCFD

#### ***Suggested Topics for Caregiver meetings***

- Reducing family stress
- Attachment
- Self-harm
- Education Advocacy
- Fire setting
- Parenting traumatized children

#### **For more information:**

Kathleen Hume, Regional Coordinator  
10142 101st Avenue  
Fort St. John, BC  
V1J 2B3

Phone: 250-785-6021 ext 235  
Cell: 250-793-2267  
Fax: 250-785-4659

Email: [Foster@communitybridge.ca](mailto:Foster@communitybridge.ca)

Or check out the website @ [northeastfosterfamilies.ca](http://northeastfosterfamilies.ca)

## CFCSA Section 54.01 and 54.1—What's the Difference?

We hear these terms often but what do they really mean? It can be confusing, but it's worth the effort to understand the details and the difference between these two methods of transferring guardianship of children.

Under two sections of the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA), the Director (an MCFD employee) is able to apply for a transfer of custody. One applies to children who have Continuing Custody Order (CCO) status and the other applies to children who have been living with a third party (most often a family member) and who are not under the Ministry's permanent guardianship.

The CFCSA recommends that all potential legal guardians seek legal advice and consultation regarding the proposed undertaking of guardianship through either a 54.01 or 54.1.

### "54.01" - Permanent Transfer of Custody BEFORE a Continuing Custody Order (CCO)

Section 54.01 of the CFCSA allows for a delegated member of the Ministry of Children and Family Development acting on behalf of the Director to attempt to find a permanent caregiver for a child who is not in permanent custody of the Ministry (ie. does not have CCO status), and who is living with a third party—usually a family or extended family member. Most often the transfer of guardianship is to a family member of the child who is first placed in the home under the Extended Family Program and who has been in the home for at least 6 months.



Once the necessary consultation, notice of application and arrangements have been made, MCFD applies to the court through Section 54.01 of the CFCSA, to transfer guardianship to the chosen guardian. The court is able to waive the 6-month residency period if it is in the child's best interests to do so.

Once approval has been granted and the guardianship is in place the order can only be varied or cancelled under the Family Law Act, not through the CFCSA. A person who receives custody under section 54.01 is eligible to receive financial support from the director (generally the foster care maintenance rate for the appropriate age group). The guardian assumes all other expenses including medical and dental costs.

Transfer of guardianship under section 54.01 *is not the same as an adoption* as the law will not consider the child to have any claim on your estate. Likewise the guardian has no claim over the child's estate. The child does retain all pre-existing rights to any inheritance or succession to Property rights, as well as Aboriginal rights or privileges.

When guardianship is granted, it includes responsibility for the child's estate. In addition, any existing access orders made under the CFCSA terminate. Access and visitation with the child will then be arranged directly with the new guardian or new access orders can be applied for through the Family Law Act.

### "54.1" - Permanent Transfer of Custody AFTER a Continuing Custody Order (CCO)

Once a child has CCO status, any transfer of guardianship has to be done through Section 54.1 of the CFCSA. The intention of this process is to transfer guardianship away from the Ministry to permanent caregivers but in a manner less radical and permanent than adoption.

Although education is not necessarily a requirement of guardians under Section 54.1, families would benefit from self-directed Education—accessible through the Ministry.

After guardianship has been transferred, access orders made under Section 56 of the CFCSA becomes an access order that cannot be confirmed, modified or cancelled under the CFCSA. Preexisting access orders under Section 56 are then between the new guardian and the person who is granted access.

54.1 applications can transfer guardianship to family or non-family Members—the key is that the child has CCO status. Either way, legal obligations toward the child end on the child's 19th birthday.

In general, regular foster care rates apply to the 54.1 placements though medical and dental expenses are not covered and the guardians are not eligible for the Child Tax Benefit.

#### General Point of Interest:

Both these transfers of custody take place when the child cannot be returned to parental care though parents are able, under the 54.01, to petition the court for the return of custody. As this is the case with 54.01, grandparents often access this form of guardianship.





## The Child and the Starfish

Early one morning, an elderly man was walking along the seashore when he spotted a young girl swiftly moving along the beach, picking up starfish that had been stranded on the shore, throwing them back into the ocean. He approached the girl and asked what she was doing.

"I'm saving the starfish," she said eagerly.

The man, glancing at the shore, turned to the girl and said, "There are thousands of starfish stranded on the beach. You can't save them all and one little girl is not going to make a difference."

The girl thought about this for a moment, then she reached down and picked up a starfish, tossed it into the ocean, and said, "But I saved that one. And I'm sure I made a difference for that one." *Author unknown*



**Foster Parents Make a Difference!**  
Thank You  
from  
**Okanagan Foster Parents Association**  
and your community



## Flu and Cold Season—Keep Your Family Healthy

Everyone knows that frequent hand washing with good old soap for 20 to 30 seconds is the most effective way to guard against germs that lead to illness. Here are some additional tips and foods you can incorporate into your family's diet to help keep you all healthy!

### **Remove the Germs**

Be in the habit of disinfecting the kitchen sink, counters, trash can, bathroom faucets, toilet (don't forget the flush handle or button!) and tub. Regularly wash and disinfect the cloth or sponge used to clean your home as well. These are the places with the largest source of contaminants.

### **Get Moving**

A brisk walk 5 times a week helps reduce your likelihood of catching a cold. (And contrary to the myth, you won't actually catch a cold by being out in the cold. To catch a cold or flu, you must have been exposed to a virus.)

### **Eat Immune System Boosting Foods**

**Yogurt** has active live cultures (probiotics) that keep the digestive tract free of disease causing germs.

**Oats and barley** have antimicrobial and antioxidant properties.

**Garlic** contains allicin which fights infection and bacteria.

**Shellfish** possess a wealth of immune supporting elements with proteins and omega-3 fats which protect against viruses.

**Chicken soup**—it's not a myth! It blocks inflammation!

**Tea—black or green**, several cups a day, loads you up with virus-fighting interferon.

**Beef** contains zinc, which is an immunity-bolstering mineral.

**Sweet potatoes** contain beta-carotene which your body turns into Vitamin A—which your skin requires to be a healthy shield against viruses and bacteria.

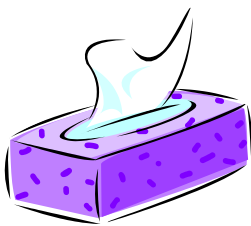
**Mushrooms—(Japanese)** increase the activity of white blood cells ... those microscopic disease fighters, making them more aggressive.

**Citrus fruits** contain the virus-fighting Vitamin C, an antioxidant which is also present in many vegetables.

**Ginger** is a strong anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial and also an antioxidant that can be eaten, made into a tea or used as an antiseptic. There are two natural antibiotics found in ginger.

**Honey** soothes sore throats and has powerful antioxidant and antimicrobial properties that kill germs, viruses and fungi. *Please remember not to give honey to children under 1 year of age because their immune system is not developed enough to fight off infantile botulism which is carried in honey spores.*

Wishing you a healthy transition into Fall and Winter!



## Interior Community Services Support to Family Care Program



Thank-you to BCFFPA for providing foster caregiver support agencies an opportunity to place our information in the FosterlineBC magazine.

This is what Interior Community Services Support To Family Care Network Program is all about:

We provide services to a network of foster caregivers in the Cariboo, Thompson/Shuswap, Gold Trail, and the East & West Kootenays. We collaborate with foster parents (including BCFFPA Locals), MCFD and Delegated Aboriginal and Metis Agencies in each community to:

- Recruit and encourage retention of foster parents
- Provide Pre-Service Orientation (essential fostering information) for community members interested in becoming caregivers
- Offer the Foster Parent Education Program in a way that meets individual needs of caregivers – one to one, in interactive groups, mail correspondence or on-line through agency website
- Recognize contributions of foster caregivers throughout the year, formally in October, Foster Family Appreciation month
- Support caregivers through protocols and resolving issues
- Offer training and educational opportunities to meet needs identified in each community – ie.: Safe Babies Training, workshops involving (when possible) local community resources. Resources to borrow available.
- On-going email/post communication highlighting opportunities that may interest caregivers
- Send out newsletters to help connect fostering communities and bring focus to issues and information. Newsletters are available on website: [www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](http://www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

We have Program Facilitators that connect with each fostering community area:

- **Williams Lake – Sharon**
- **100 Mile House – Sandi**
- **East Kootenay – Frank**
- **Clearwater, Barrier, Ashcroft, Lillooet, Merritt, Kamloops, Revelstoke – Deb, Kari, Debbie**
- **West Kootenay in partnership with ARC Programs - Joyce**

- **Program Coordinator for all areas – Lisa Ward:**  
[lward@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca](mailto:lward@interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca)

### **Additional Contacts**

**Main office:** 250-554-3134

**Toll Free:** 1-877-376-3660 ext. 205

**Cell for after- hours crisis support calls:** 250-319-3057

Please feel welcome to contact Lisa at any time.

### **Foster Caregiver Community Groups**

Groups are established in each community to ensure caregivers have an opportunity to network with their peers. Building relationships and feeling valued are benefits provided by group participation where members share challenges and celebrate successes. The objective of these groups is to support quality care of children while providing a forum for local issues, concerns, experiences, solutions, and determining training and support needs.

Program Facilitators collaborate with foster caregivers who volunteer their time to be a Liaison for each group in order to meet group objectives. Facilitators also work to establish connections with group members and to support planning and implementation of plans that the group and/or Liaison's would like to see happen. We 100% appreciate the efforts of these individuals who are invested in helping other caregivers.

We endeavor to hold Regional Networking meetings yearly where Liaisons, MCFD, and Support To Family Care Network program staff get together to identify common issues, share ideas and what's working well to address issues in each community. We look forward to providing updates on areas and fostering information to FosterlineBC in future issues.....Thanks Again!

***Foster Family Month is an excellent time to practice...***

### **Self Care**

Otherwise known as “taking care of yourself”, “stress management” and sometimes even “self-indulgence” (gasp!), there are some very wise reasons why you should incorporate this into your daily and weekly routine.

- It's the best way to beat stress and to keep stress from overwhelming you.
- Caregivers can suffer burnout and vicarious trauma when they are always “on” and don't take a break.
- It enhances your feelings of wellbeing and supports your self-esteem.
- Time taken for ourselves allows us to feel more generous and open to others.
- Time away from the routine supports our physical health

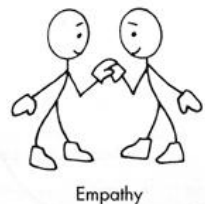
...check out our Selfcare for Foster Caregivers video at [www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa](http://www.youtube.com/user/bcffpa).

## What Is Vicarious Trauma, and How Does It Put Me at Risk?

By Jayne Wilson

### *What is vicarious trauma?*

Vicarious trauma, also called “compassion fatigue” is the emotion residue of ongoing or prolonged exposure to the stories or traumatic episodes (pain, fear, terror) related by the survivors of trauma. Considered a “cost of caring”, vicarious trauma is most often experienced by counselors and other care workers, though foster parents are at risk as well.



### *Is it the same as burnout?*

No, it's very different. Burnout can usually be resolved with a change of pace, a holiday or changing workload or routine. Vicarious trauma is a preoccupation with stories and trauma experiences of others. Those who experience vicarious trauma can be in a persistent arousal state or they may avoid talking or thinking about what the trauma effected person has been talking about, almost seeming numb to the details.

### *How can it affect me?*

Vicarious trauma can have far reaching effects on many levels: mentally, emotionally and physically and it can certainly have consequences for relationships in the work you do everyday as caregivers and with your own families.

### *What symptoms should my family and I watch for?*

On it's own, any symptom could manifest for a variety of reasons. In general, mental health counselors would look for multiple symptoms (4-5 on average) and do comprehensive assessments before considering a mental health diagnosis.

- Difficulty talking about feelings
- Free floating anger or irritation
- Startle effect/jumpiness
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Insomnia or waking at night
- Obsessive thoughts about the traumatized individual
- Worry about ineffectiveness, feeling you can't do enough to help
- Dreaming about another person's trauma experience
- Lack of enjoyment for familiar things
- Feeling trapped
- Intrusive thoughts of traumatized individual
- Blaming others for your problems

These are just a few of the possible symptoms of vicarious trauma. If you have concerns or would like more information, check out [www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca) or feel free to call the provincial BCFFPA office anytime to discuss support and referral.

## From Foster Child to Foster Parent—Rheanna's Story continued from page 11...

I notice this trait about foster parents—not only are they caretakers, they are also community builders. They offer security, guidance, kindness, routine, structure, affection and even love, to kids who need all those things. They expose the young people in their care to extended families and friends who “get” fostering (something that not everyone understands) and who have a broader view of the composition of “family”.

In Rheanna's case, as with others who have spent time in the foster care system, their families are expanded in two ways—by being embraced by the family of their foster caregivers and later by offering their love and support to a younger generation. Building healthier, inclusive communities that care about one another—that's what it's all about.

Thanks to Rheanna, and to all foster parents for the work you do every day to help BC's kids in care. Happy Foster Family Month!



## BCFFPA Wish List

Budgets are always tight and it's difficult to keep our technology up to date. Over the past two office moves, our already dilapidated furniture has taken a beating. BCFFPA is seeking donations for the following items:

- Sectional desks
- Steno chairs
- Meeting room chairs
- Reception chairs—or a sofa in good shape
- Coffee table or side table
- 3 new desktop computers
- Digital camera
- InDesign desktop publishing software
- Photoshop picture editing software
- Tablets for Board members
- Sponsor for a children's reading corner

If you are interested in making a donation or know someone who is, please contact Jayne for details. Our thanks to you!





# Community Resources

## Provincial Resources

|                                                                                                        |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations</b><br>www.bcfosterparents.ca                           | 1-800-663-9999 |
| <b>After Hours Foster Parent Support Line</b>                                                          | 1-888-495-4440 |
| <b>Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents</b><br>www.fafp.ca                                          | 1-866-291-7091 |
| <b>Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks</b><br>www.fbcyicn.ca                                       | 1-800-565-8055 |
| <b>Adoptive Families Association</b><br>www.bcadoption.com                                             | 1-877-236-7807 |
| <b>Pacific Post Partum Support Society</b><br>www.postpartum.org (also supporting adoption placements) | 604-255-7999   |
| <b>Parent Help Line</b>                                                                                | 1-888-603-9100 |
| <b>Parents Together</b>                                                                                | 604-325-0511   |
| <b>Parent Support Services of BC</b><br>www.parentsupport.bc.ca                                        | 1-800-665-6880 |
| <b>Representative for Children &amp; Youth</b><br>www.rcybc.ca                                         | 1-800-476-3933 |
| <b>FAE/S Support Network</b>                                                                           | 604-507-6675   |

## Coastal Fraser

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                                                        |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Hollyburn Family Services</b><br>www.hollyburn.ca                                                   | 604-987-8211 |
| <b>Vancouver Aboriginal Child &amp; Family Services Society</b><br>www.vacfss.com                      | 778-331-4500 |
| <b>Family Services of Greater Vancouver</b><br>www.fosterhub.ca                                        | 604-279-7100 |
| <b>Fraser Valley Foster Parent Association</b>                                                         | 604-533-1924 |
| <b>Abbotsford Community Services Foster Parent Caregiver Support</b>                                   | 604-859-2165 |
| <b>South Vancouver Youth Centre</b><br>www.svyc.ca<br>(Ask about their foster parent support workers!) | 604-325-2004 |

## Island

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                    |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Foster Parent Support Services Society</b>                      | 1-888-922-8437 |
| FPSSS (Victoria)                                                   | 778-430-5459   |
| FPSSS (Nanaimo)                                                    | 250-390-9686   |
| FPSSS (Campbell River)                                             | 250-286-0555   |
| <b>Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents</b><br>(Nanaimo office) | 250-591-0069   |

## Interior

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                           |                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Okanagan Foster Parent Association</b><br>www.okfosterparents.ca       |                |
| Central Okanagan                                                          | 250-868-9285   |
| North Okanagan                                                            | 250-558-0939   |
| South Okanagan                                                            | 250-488-0561   |
| Shuswap                                                                   | 250-253-4499   |
| <b>Okanagan Metis Children &amp; Family Services</b>                      | 250-868-0351   |
| <b>Interior Community Services</b><br>www.interiorcommunityservices.bc.ca | 1-877-376-3660 |

## North

*For contact information for local foster parent groups or support in your area, please call 1-800-663-9999.*

|                                                                                                      |                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>AXIS Family Resources</b><br>(24/7 support)<br>www.axis.bc.ca (satellite office locations online) | 1-877-392-1003<br>Press 205 |
| <b>North Peace Community Resources Society</b><br>Fort St. John                                      | 250-785-6021<br>(ext. 235)  |

*We are in the process of developing our Community Resources page. Please submit your relevant contacts to [jayne@bcfosterparents.ca](mailto:jayne@bcfosterparents.ca).*

## Advertise Here! (1/2 page size)

### Readership, Exposure & Frequency

- **FosterlineBC** reaches over 3400 foster parents, agencies, community service locations, businesses and other individuals 4 times each year.
- Increase exposure for your business by advertising in **FosterlineBC**

### Cost

- 1/2 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$925
- 1/2 page ~ single issue ~ \$250
- 1/4 page ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$650
- 1/4 page ~ single issue ~ \$175
- Business card ~ 4 issues per year ~ \$475
- Business card ~ single issue ~ \$125

For information on advertising in FosterlineBC, contact a staff member at BCFFPA! **1-800-663-9999**

**1/4 Page Size**

**Business Card Size**

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

Please complete & return to: **BCFFPA - 131 Eighth Street, New Westminster, BC V3M 3P6**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City & Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

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**

131 Eighth Street

New Westminster, BC V3M

