

April 1, 2009

Dear Day Care Program and Family Day Home Agency Operators:

The past year has proven to be a successful one for child care in our province, with more than 6,500 new child care spaces created across Alberta. This includes over 2,400 new spaces in licensed day cares and approved family day homes, which will help address some of the challenges some parents have faced when looking for quality child care.

To continue to support the creation and sustainability of quality spaces, the Alberta government is taking steps to ensure its child care investments target the areas that have the greatest need. That is why we have made some minor adjustments to grants under the Alberta Child Care Accreditation Funding Program, effective April 1, 2009.

Staff Attraction Incentive Allowance

The Staff Attraction Incentive Allowance was established to help operators recruit staff in a very competitive labour market. Because of the global economic slow-down, operators are now telling us that in many cases, they are able to choose between multiple candidates when recruiting, especially staff certified as entry-level child development assistants. Operators are also saying that they are still finding it difficult to attract higher levels of certified staff. For that reason, we have adjusted the eligibility criteria for the Staff Attraction Incentive Allowance to specifically target staff certified as child development workers and supervisors. High school students that are eligible for the High School Child Care Career Scholarship will continue to be eligible for the Staff Attraction Incentive Allowance, following the completion of their post-secondary training.

Technical Support Services

The Technical Assistant Grant was put in place to offset some of the costs associated with the accreditation process. The Ministry contracts with the Alberta Resource Centre for Quality Enhancement (ARCQE) to provide accreditation technical support services to programs, free-of-charge. This service will replace the Technical Assistant Grant. Child care programs that wish to purchase additional technical support, over and above what is provided under this contract, have the flexibility to access funding through the Quality Funding Grant.

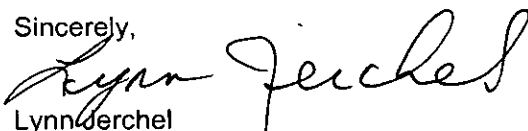
Professional Development Funding

The Professional Development Grant, of up to \$1,000 per year, supports skills development through education and training. This grant will continue to be available to child development assistants and workers to help them reach their next level of certification. Staff can use this grant to help pay for post-secondary tuition and required course textbooks. Child development supervisors, who are already certified at the highest level, wishing to access training, can still apply for up to \$10,000 through the Child Care Leadership Bursary Program.

The Alberta Child Care Accreditation Funding Program – Guide for Licensed Day Care Programs and Guide for Family Day Home Agencies is currently being updated and will be posted to the Ministry website by mid April 2009.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the delivery of quality child care. Should you need further clarification, please feel free to call the Child Development Branch at 780-422-1119 or toll-free by calling 1-800-661-9754.

Sincerely,



Lynn Derchel
Director, Child Development Branch