



November 20, 2008

## **Modulars create new quality child care spaces in communities**

### ***Parents in region to benefit from more options***

*Grande Prairie...* Northwest Alberta Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) announced today that they are adding five modulars to increase the number of quality child care spaces in our region. Wembley (two), High Level (two) and Grimshaw are the three communities which will be first to receive modulars, with others not far behind.

“We are committed to helping parents find quality, affordable child care for their children and helping child care providers create and sustain more quality child care spaces, while recruiting and retaining trained staff,” said Carole Anne Patenaude, the Chief Executive Officer of Northwest Alberta CFSA.

Northwest Alberta CFSA determined the need for modulars for Wembley, High Level and Grimshaw as these communities had no facilities for child care available and needed units to address ongoing infrastructure barriers. Northwest Alberta CFSA still has an allocation of 10 modulars to place in the region over the next two years.

School divisions in communities such as Valleyview, Grande Prairie, Manning and others are still working through consultations and planning and can expect to be part of future modular planning. Finalizing the placement of modulars includes parent consultation, finalizing details on location, getting municipal involvement and coordination with community partners.

Partnerships with the Peace Wapiti, Fort Vermillion and Peace River school divisions has helped make the placing of these modulars a reality for the respective communities of Wembley, High Level and Grimshaw. Continued efforts with school divisions throughout the region will be an important factor to placing the remaining 10 modular units.

Earlier this year, regional community consultation sessions with the Northwest Alberta CFSA Board of Directors and ongoing work from the Northwest Alliance of Child Care Professionals showed the child care needs for each community and helped determine a plan to provide support services.

Northwest Alberta CFSA CEO Carole Anne Patenaude is pleased with the progress that is being made and said, “Our region will continue to identify and engage all community-based partners to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of child care.”

The placing of these modular units is being done with Alberta Child and Youth Services as part of *Creating Child Care Choices*, the Ministry’s plan to create an additional 14,000 child care spaces over the next three years and introduce a subsidy for low and middle income families with children aged six to 12. The plan builds on the Ministry’s successes and addresses challenges in the creation of high quality, affordable child care for children up to 12 years of age.

The Northwest Alberta CFSA has a target of 997 new spaces by 2011 and the region has developed an action plan to address the government's priority to ensure that "Alberta families have access to quality, affordable child care".

A modular is a fully functioning and serviced portable unit which is placed adjacent to a school and creates close to 20 new spaces for child care. Northwest Alberta CFSA provides funding for site preparation and all other necessities to set-up a functioning modular. New facilities will be operated by private agencies from the community or additional resources are also available through the Making Spaces provincial grant and this funding can be utilized for staff attraction, child development and other resources.

For more information on subsidies and how to find a quality child care program, parents and caregivers can call Northwest Alberta Child and Family Services at 780-538-5122, or visit the CFSA website at [www.northwestalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca](http://www.northwestalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca).

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## **Creating Child Care Choices: A plan to support Northwest families**

### ***Supporting the creation of 997 new child care spaces***

In May 2008, the Alberta government announced that it was supporting the creation of 14,000 new, quality child care spaces across the province by 2011. By investing \$242 million over three years, the *Creating Child Care Choices* will support the creation of new spaces in a variety of settings, including family day homes, nursery schools, day cares and out-of-school care programs. This year, the Alberta government will invest an additional \$76 million to support space creation, assist child care operators in their efforts to recruit and retain staff and help low- and middle-income parents pay for child care.

Northwest Alberta Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) is one of ten regional authorities delivering services to Albertans on behalf of Alberta Children and Youth Services. Northwest Alberta CFSA supports children, parents, families caregivers, and its regional partners in several ways:

- ✓ Sustaining and creating more quality child care spaces:
  - Support the creation of 997 quality child care spaces in the Northwest region by 2011;
  - Work with local school boards to place child care “modulars” or portables adjacent to schools in the areas of greatest need. Northwest Alberta CFSA has been allocated 15 portables over three years – five of these in the first year;
  - Support existing family day home agencies in their efforts to expand into rural areas;
  - Work closely with the child care service sector and communities to attract new family day home providers – particularly to provide infant care – especially in rural areas;
  - Added focus on meeting the child care needs of multi-cultural communities, children with special needs and the development of infant child care spaces;
  
- ✓ Recruitment and retention of trained staff:
  - Support regional recruitment of new child care staff who will be needed as new child care spaces are created;
  - Promote awareness of provincial wage top-ups, staff attraction and retention incentives and scholarship funds for high school students;
  - Partner with local child care associations, educational institutions and others to support training and staff recognition events;

- ✓ Leading and partnering with others:
  - Partner with the Northwest Alliance of Child Care Professionals to build community capacity to maintain and increase quality child care spaces;
  - Facilitate partnerships between communities, the child care sector and business organizations of all sizes, to improve access to quality child care spaces;
  - Work with Aboriginal communities and agencies to increase awareness of and access to provincial funding available to create Aboriginal child care spaces;
  - Support the child care sector in building capacity by enhancing regional partnerships and accessing provincial funding and programs;
  
- ✓ Supporting parents:
  - Improve parents' awareness of increased provincial subsidy rates for Kin Child Care and pre-school child care;
  - Focus on increasing the number of Kin Child Care spaces (paying non-custodial relatives to care for their child outside of the home);
  - Create awareness of benefits to private child caregivers in becoming an approved family day home;
  - Raise awareness of new provincial child care subsidy for school-aged children.

For more information on subsidies and how to find a quality child care program, parents and caregivers can call Child Care Services at 780-538-5122 or visit Northwest Alberta CFSA's website at [www.northwestalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca](http://www.northwestalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca). For more information about Alberta Child and Youth Services initiatives, including subsidy information, please visit [www.child.alberta.ca/home/587.cfm](http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/587.cfm).

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