



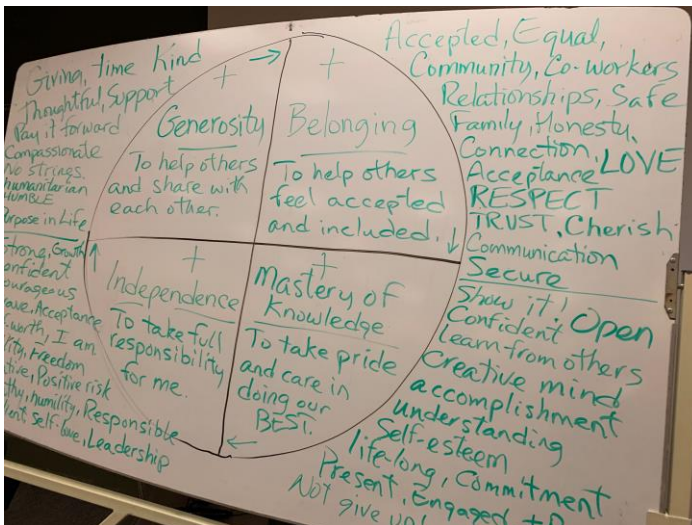
Medicine Hat & District  
**CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION**



**Annual Report 2019-2020**

The Medicine Hat & District Child Care Association appreciates the strong partnership we have had with Alberta Children's Services South Region for over 12 years now. This relationship has allowed us to provide support to early learning and child care programs across Southeast Alberta. We are one of the strongest, most well-connected child care communities in Alberta, working hard on all fronts to promote high quality licensed and approved early learning and child care.

The Government of Alberta's Well-Being and Resiliency Framework states that child care is an important protective factor for young children. Our organization strives to incorporate Child Intervention Practice Framework principles into our work. This includes learning more about the indigenous experience and how we can honour this when working with children and families. We also believe that children should be in safe and healthy families. Our member programs provide support to families around child development, early learning and community resources. The MHDCCA focuses on strengths in our community and membership. We connect regularly and encourage collaboration. We want to work together to build a positive and respectful network. We also believe in continuous improvement with our executive board and membership reviewing work that is being done on a regular basis. We strive to be innovative in our approach.



Circle of Courage Indigenous Workshop

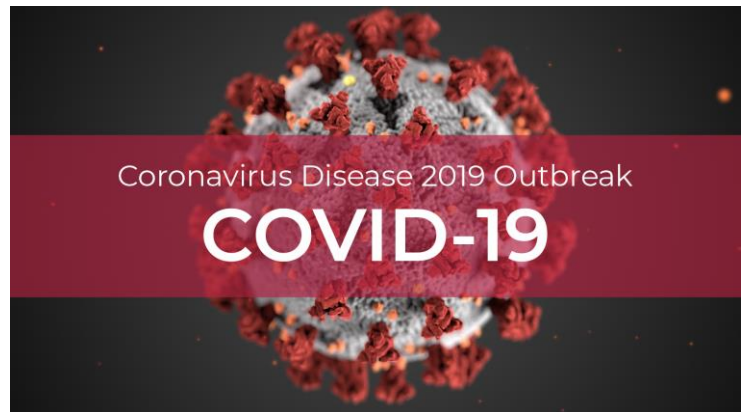
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This year's work remained in supporting programs by listening to concerns, giving opportunities for networking, planning professional

development for educators, delivering funding to child care programs, presenting information on Choosing Quality Child Care to parents, working collaboratively with other community groups like the Medicine Hat Early Childhood Coalition and much more.

At the end of the fiscal year 2019-2020, we have been hit hard by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our organization responded quickly by creating a pandemic response plan, connecting with licensing and health to provide up-to-date information to our membership, hosting director's teleconferences and working with provincial groups to support programs and educators.

At the time of this report, there is much uncertainty in our field. The majority of our child care programs have been mandated to close. Only a few selected centers have been asked to re-open for essential service workers. Our day home agencies also continue to work hard to provide spaces for children and families during this difficult time. We know our directors and educators care deeply for the children that have been in their programs. The relationships that have been formed over the years remain strong. Our directors and educators are devastated that they are unable to connect on a daily basis with the children and



families. We have seen many innovative connections being made. Whether it be reading stories to children over video conference, posting physical literacy videos to Facebook or dropping off toys and equipment to families who have children with special needs, our child care programs have shown their strength and their resiliency.



We know that there are challenges being faced and still on the way. Nonetheless, we are grateful that the MHDCCA can remain a place for directors and educators to turn during this crisis.

**Here is a selection of the feedback we have received in the last month from our membership about how the MHDCCA has been a resource and support to their program during the COVID-19 Pandemic:**

“We appreciate [the executive board] for their continued dedication to all they do for the association. We appreciate [the coordinator] as well; you are diligent, efficient and supportive to us all” – Preschool Director

“Thanks for all your work. So many things to keep straight and sending us all those updates. Really appreciate it.”—Out of School Care Director

“Again, thank you for all the work you have been doing through all this! Especially keeping everyone connected!!!” – Child Care Center & Out of School Care Director

“Thank you for all the work you are doing to keep everyone connected and informed through this time, it is appreciated.” – Preschool Director

“Thank you [to the MHDCCA] for everything you are doing. This is so stressful and your help is very much appreciated.” – Child Care Centre Director

“Thank you for ‘EVERYTHING’ over the years, all you do and have done to make our jobs more bearable, helping us cope and feel good about what we do, as child care providers, especially at a time like now! To say that being a part of this Association has been a blessing is an understatement. I honestly don't know what we would have done or where would we would be today, if not for your open hearts, ever-listening ears never-ending support and diligent service... Thank you from the bottom of my heart.” – Out of School Care Director

“Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate being part of the MHDCCA. Thank you so much for being available to answer all our questions and concerns. Having been part of other daycare director's associations, the unity and inclusion this region strives to maintain is just beyond awesome and I'm glad to be part of it. Thank you for all that you do on our behalf.” – Child Care Centre Director

## MHDCCA at a glance

### **Mission:**

The Medicine Hat and District Child Care Association works to support the child care community by promoting quality outcomes for children 0-12 years of age.

### **Values of the Association:**

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Accountability/financial stewardship
- Respect for diversity
- Commitment to quality

### **Goals of the Association**

- To promote best practices in early childhood environments
- To raise awareness that quality child care is a vital asset to the community
- To support and recognize early childhood educators
- To ensure strong governance policies support the organization

### **Executive Board 2019-2020:**

Carleen Schaan, Chairperson  
 Tammy Paulson, Vice Chairperson  
 Lisa Lutz, Secretary/Treasurer

### **Service Provider:**

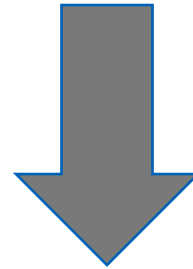
Jennifer Usher, Coordinator

### **Standing Committees:**

- Funding Committee
- Recruitment, Recognition, and Retention Committee



**MEDICINE HAT & DISTRICT  
 Child Care Association**



**Medicine Hat & District  
 CHILD CARE ASSOCIATION**

**A FRESH NEW LOOK  
 FOR 2020!**

## Program Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measurements (April 2019- March 2020)

Goal	Outcome	Performance Measures	Target	Results
To provide an opportunity for child care providers to enhance knowledge regarding best practices in early childhood environments	Members feel that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children	Track Professional development opportunities through year for members  Survey	3 PD opportunities per year with at least 40 Educators, Educational Assistants and Administrators in attendance  75% of members reported that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children	<p>May 2019: Circle of Courage Workshop (53 attendees) 97.5% of members reported that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children</p> <p>June 2019: Brooks ECE Chat Night (9 attendees)</p> <p>June 2019: Brain Architecture Game (8 attendees)</p> <p>October 2019: Child Care Crawl (114 attendees)</p> <p>November 2019: Canadian Mental Health Suicide Awareness Workshop (60 attendees) 97% of members reported that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children</p> <p>January 2020: Brooks ECE Chat Night (10 attendees)</p> <p>January 2020: Brooks Circle of Ideas Workshop (46 attendees)</p> <p>February 2020: Teacher Tom Workshop (193 attendees)</p> <p>March 2020: Brooks ECE Chat Night (20 attendees)</p>

Goal	Outcome	Performance Measures	Target	Results
To maintain open lines of communication for information to directors and line staff/providers regarding MHDCCA activities, best practice changes, PD opportunities, community events, etc.	Individual staff/providers will be invited to become individual members and will receive weekly email updates from the coordinator with info on best practice, PD opportunities, community events, etc. Directors will receive monthly newsletters from the coordinator with info regarding MHDCCA activities, articles on child development, etc.	# weekly updates sent per year Lists of PD opportunities included in weekly update  # of monthly newsletters per year # of Child Care Administrators reached	30 weekly updates sent to at least 150 Early Childhood Educators   10 monthly newsletters per year with an expected reach of at least 50 Child Care Administrators.	April 2019 – March 2020 31 weekly updates sent to an average of 375 Educators   10 Newsletters (April, May, June, September, October, November, December, January, February, March) sent out to 82 MHDCCA child care directors or other members
Provide funding to members to support best practice in their unique programs with a focus on one or more of the following categories: child development, child-caregiver interactions, facility enhancement, program administration, inclusive/multicultural programming, professional development	Child care program's capacity to serve families will be improved.  Directors report that the funding provided has improved their service for children and families.	# of programs accessing funding   Survey	100% of regular child care program members   80% of Directors report that the funding provided has improved their service for children and families.	100% of members were allocated funding, 95% accessed it. There were 2 OSC programs that closed.   100% of Directors report that the funding provided has improved their service for children and families.

<p>To build a stronger connection with child care program operators across the region allowing the MHDCCA to provide a wider span of support</p>	<p>Rural programs will feel welcome to become a part of the MHDCCA.</p> <p>Non-member programs will receive information on a yearly basis about the MHDCCA and what type of support we provide.</p>	<p># of rural programs visited</p> <p>% of non-member programs receiving information</p>	<p>Coordinator will visit at least 1 rural program outside of Medicine Hat per year to offer membership.</p> <p>Yearly, the Coordinator will send membership information to 100% of the programs outside of Medicine Hat who are not currently members.</p>	<p>Pandemic delayed plans for visits. Bow Island Playschool is our newest member from a rural area. A visit with this program was conducted over the phone in April 2019.</p> <p>April 2020: 100% of all non-member programs were sent information</p>
<p>To raise public awareness that quality child care is a vital asset to our community</p>	<p>The public will be offered information on quality child care and the activities of the MHDCCA on a regular basis.</p>	<p># of times the MHDCCA attends community events per year</p> <p># of articles printed in the Medicine Hat News per year</p> <p># of Choosing Quality Child Care packages put out to local community agencies,</p>	<p>4 Community Events and/or Job Fairs per year</p> <p>3 Medicine Hat News Articles per year</p> <p>25 Choosing Quality Child Care packages per year</p>	<p>April 2019: Importance of Early Learning and Care (In Partnership with AECEA)</p> <p>June 2019: Get Outside &amp; Play Day</p> <p>August 2019: Fresh Start to School Event</p> <p>August 2019: 2 Get Outside &amp; Play Day events</p> <p>October 2019: Medicine Hat College Job Fair</p> <p>April 2019: Article re Importance of Early Learning and Child Care</p> <p>November 2019: Article re Winter Play</p> <p>January 2020: Article re Risky Play</p> <p>March 2020: Article re Accreditation</p> <p>March 2020: Rural article on choosing quality care, delayed because of COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>23 packages handed out at the Choosing Quality Child Care Sessions</p> <p>25 packages given to Nurture Pregnancy Center, LEARN (Family Literacy) and Medicine Hat Public Library</p>



<p>To recognize staff/providers for their valuable contributions to our member's child care programs</p>	<p>Members report feeling recognized and supported within the local child care community</p>	<p># of ECE highlights featured in the MHDCCA newsletter</p> <p>Survey</p>	<p>3 ECE highlights in the MHDCCA newsletter per year</p> <p>75% of members report feeling recognized and supported within the local child care community</p>	<p>4 Completed</p> <p>June 2019: Little Owl Learning Centre &amp; MHWSS Treehouse</p> <p>September 2019: YMCA Before &amp; After School Programs</p> <p>October 2019: Little Owl Learning Centre</p> <p>November 2019: Mother Nature's Preschool</p> <p>98% of members report feeling recognized and supported within the local child care community</p>
<p>To plan events that relate to Early Childhood Educator appreciation and allow for Networking</p>	<p>Educators and other staff in the MHDCCA's members programs will feel appreciated and connected to their local child care community.</p>	<p>Survey</p>	<p>Following the event, 75% of Educators reporting feeling appreciated and connected to the local child care community</p>	<p>February 2020: Teacher Tom with ECE Brunch &amp; Wellness Break- 98.5% of ECEs reported feeling appreciated and connected to the local child care community</p>
<p>To ensure strong governance supports the association and its work with its members</p>	<p>The MHDCCA will Produce an Annual Report in May each year detailing the year's accomplishments. The MHDCCA will continue with data collection on MHDCCA's activities on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>Annual Report sent to CFS</p> <p>Data collection sent to CFS</p>	<p>Receipt of report within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year.</p> <p>Twice per year the data collection spreadsheet will be sent to CFS.</p>	<p>Sent as requested</p> <p>Sent as requested</p>

## **SECTION I Program Information:**

### **1. Identify program activities and services offered during the year.**

The Mission of the Medicine Hat District Child Care Association is to support the child care community by promoting quality outcomes for children 0-12 years of age. The three core areas of our work include:

- **To promote best practices in early childhood environments** (Professional Development including Teacher Tom all day workshop, various professional learning sessions, Early Childhood Educator Chat Nights in Brooks; professional memberships or partnerships with Association for Early Childhood Educators of Alberta, Canadian Child Care Federation, Medicine Hat Early Childhood Coalition; Allocation of funding to child care programs to improve quality of care)
- **To raise awareness that quality child care is a vital asset to our community** (TV News interviews, Medicine Hat Newspaper articles, Choosing quality child care presentations at the Baby Steps classes at the health unit and other organizations, handing out Choosing quality child care information packages to various community agencies, hosting booths at a variety of community events)
- **To support and recognize Early Childhood Educators** (Wellness brunch at Teacher Tom event Medicine Hat News articles, monthly newsletter featuring Meet our Early Childhood Educators, attendance at local job fairs)

Please see data collection for 2019-2020 for more details.

### **2. Identify any program development that has occurred during the past year.**

In terms of membership, there was a small increase in membership during this fiscal year. The most increase was seen in associate memberships as the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education signed all of its Early Learning Programs up as members.

Our professional learning opportunities continue to be developed based on our member's needs and suggestions. Due to the pandemic, we will begin offering professional learning webinars in the next fiscal year.

We have reached out to other organizations in the city to offer Choosing Quality Child Care presentations. We also had plans to expand the reach of this information via presentations and articles to rural areas of Southeast Alberta. These plans are on hold until after the child care programs re-open.

Our provincial connections have widened this year with increased involvement with the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta. This allows us to bring back to our region the most up-to-date information for our educators. It also gives us an avenue to share Southeast Alberta's experience.

**SECTION II Utilization of Program**

- 1. Occupancy rate for the last twelve months. Identify the total number of clients served, total number of admissions and discharges.**

<b>2019-2020</b>	
24	Child Care Centers
5	Day Home Agencies
8	Preschools
22	Out of School Cares
24	Additional Associate Members (Community Agencies, MHC ELCC, ELPs etc.)
<b>82</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

For more details please see the data collection spreadsheet in the package.

- 2. Identify issues and trends related to occupancy. Include a demographic profile of clients during the past year. (Sex, age, racial origin, etc.)**

The Coordinator continues to send out membership packages to non-members on a yearly basis. She also connects with these non-member programs via phone calls, emails, and visits.

Almost all of our members are female. There were only one or two males working in the field that we know of this year.

The majority of ECEs are approximately 20-50 years of age and of Caucasian background. However, there is some diversity within the ECEs working in the centers. The Brooks area has the most amount ECEs from diverse backgrounds, however, we have seen an increase in the number of ECEs within Medicine Hat as well.

We are seeing an increase in the number of students in our local ELCC program who are from diverse backgrounds. This can be a challenge when it comes to English language proficiency during practicum placements.

**SECTION III Evaluation of Program**

- 1. Provide outcome data on clients served.**
- 2. Provide an overview of goals and objectives accomplished and not accomplished as identified in Schedule A.**

See outcomes report on pages 5 – 10.

**3. Describe what has worked well, identify the struggles you have encountered in delivering programs and explain how you overcame any challenges.**

Membership recruitment remains a small concern. There are a few programs that have not joined our organization. We continue to offer membership on a yearly basis. We do offer out of town members the opportunity to attend meetings via teleconference to reduce travel demands.

We are still experiencing low numbers in the attendance for Choosing Quality Child Care sessions. This is not due to our work of the MHDCCA, instead it is the groups that are offering the sessions who need to increase their advertising reach.

Again this year, we saw a great demand for our Choosing quality child care packages from the Medicine Hat Early Childhood Coalition member agencies.

Our professional development, including the Teacher Tom all day workshop, has been well attended and the feedback has been excellent. Presenters have been selected through diligent research and/or suggestions from our membership.

At the end of this fiscal year, our biggest challenge has been in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. With mandatory closures of all child care programs, there was a lot of concern and confusion amongst our membership. Day home agencies remaining open had to navigate the new landscape of providing service during this stressful time. The re-opening of some child care programs for essential service workers was done very quickly by Children's Services. Particularly concerning were the new rules around sanitization and how to keep children and families safe. The MHDCCA maintained frequent communication with its membership. We attended all town halls with the Minister of Children's Services and then de-briefed with our directors at numerous director teleconferences.

**4. Demonstrate community connection, networking with community partner and how your program has been flexible to meet client's needs.**

Our coordinator sits as the Chairperson of the Medicine Hat Early Childhood Coalition. The group lost its coordinator in December 2019. This meant that its operations slowed significantly. In March 2020, the funding was cut and the coalition has not met in many months due to a loss of momentum. We are in a holding pattern waiting to see how the Family Resource Network plans go and are looking for ways to transition the work of the coalition to the FRN hub.

Our coordinator also sits as a member of the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta board. The MHDCCA coordinator has been involved in this organization and its response to the pandemic, including the development of early childhood educator webinars.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the MHDCCA's ability to be flexible. All meetings have moved to an online platform. We continue to use our newsletter network to share information. We will be offering upcoming professional development through the GOTO webinar platform. The use of this platform is being donated in partnership with the Canadian Child Care Federation.

**5. Provide an overview of critical incidents during the past year.**

N/A

**SECTION IV Personnel**

**1. Describe the staffing complement during the past year. Identify staff turnover during the past year.**

The MHDCCA employs one person, a coordinator for 30 hours per week. We have had no staff turnover in the past 10 years.

**2. Describe the training offered your staff during the past year and identify the cost of this training to your agency.**

Our staff person was able to partake in all trainings that were offered by the MHDCCA this year. This was at no cost to the agency.

The MHDCCA Coordinator is also attending the University of Alberta working towards a Masters of Elementary Education with an early years focus. She is planning on sharing some of her learning through online webinars (if time permits) in the next fiscal year.

**SECTION V Feedback**

**1. Provide a review of the program from a consumer perspective. Identify what they feel is working well and issues that they have identified to you over the last year.**

Please see previous director feedback that is included in this annual report.

Each year upon membership renewal, we conduct a survey to see how the directors are feeling about the work the MHDCCA is doing. This year's results are overwhelmingly positive.

- 100% of child care directors said that the funding provided by Children's Services has improved their service for children and families.
- 98% of child care directors reported feeling recognized and supported within the local child care community.

We also survey early childhood educators at our professional development sessions.

- At the Circle of Courage workshop, 97.5% of members reported that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children
- At the Canadian Mental Health Suicide Awareness Workshop (60 attendees) 97% of members reported that the Professional Development hosted by the MHDCCA has increased their competency and confidence in caring for children

At the Teacher Tom ECE Brunch & Wellness Break- 98.5% of ECEs reported feeling appreciated and connected to the local child care community

**2. Describe any issues or concerns that you have with the Department. N/A**



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