

# **BC FEDERATION OF FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATIONS**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL HANDBOOK**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This handbook is a collection of many papers that have been used over the years to assist in the organization of Foster Parent Associations in local communities. Information has been added which outlines required procedures to be observed by local, area and Macro/Regional associations of the Federation to assure proper accountability and organizational effectiveness.

Our special thanks to the many volunteers who have made contributions to this publication and to those in professional fields who have given permission for the use of their articles.

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### DEFINITIONS/ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout this handbook, you will find the following commonly used abbreviations:

The Ministry:	The Ministry of Children and Family Development
Federation/BCFFPA:	The B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations
C.I.C.:	Child(ren)-In-Care
Local Association:	A group of foster parents in a local community
Macro/Regional Council:	A group of foster parent representatives from local associations within a region.

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## INTRODUCTION

The B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations is an organization for foster parents run by foster parents to serve and support each other in their work as caregivers.

Foster parents provide a unique service to a community. They are the true kindred spirits who share their lives, their homes and their families with children who require the temporary love and care of a substitute family.

Joining the association is a declaration on the part of foster parents that there is something special about their positions and that they are willing to be identified specifically as foster parents.

The purposes of the Federation are

- to be the collective voice for all foster parents and promote fostering throughout British Columbia.
- to be a channel of communication between authorized child welfare agencies and foster parents in British Columbia in all matters pertaining to children and foster children in particular.
- to work with authorized child welfare agencies and other community agencies and organizations to improve fostering and child care standards.
- to promote and encourage the aims and objectives of each and every local foster parent association in British Columbia as the basic foundation unit of the foster parent organization.
- to promote and encourage the aims and objectives of each and every Macro/Regional Council of foster parent associations in each Ministry of Children & Family Development macro region of British Columbia.
- to provide advisory help and assistance to foster parents, local associations and Macro/Regional councils of foster parent associations.
- to encourage local associations and Macro/Regional councils, in cooperation with authorized child caring agencies to develop and arrange appropriate in-service training courses and other educational experiences to enhance the capabilities of foster parents.

While the main function of the association is to share experiences, support one another in time of difficulty, increase parenting skills and broaden the capacity for sensitive care, it is also necessary to educate the community slowly but surely, and to be a united, collective voice on policy and practise issues that concern foster parents.

The association opens a clear channel of communication between foster parents and the social work staff of the Ministry of Children and Family Development. This happens in a number of ways. Firstly, in addition to foster parent membership, the Federation welcomes, as associate members, the active participation of social workers and others interested in child welfare issues. Thus, we make sure that there is dialogue within our organization between foster parents and others involved in the care of children.

Secondly, the active links which the Federation maintains with the Ministry strengthen the partnership which is so vitally necessary for a comfortable working relationship between foster parents and social workers

As an organization, we are in touch not only with concerned foster parents and foster parent support agencies throughout B.C., but with similar organizations in other parts of Canada and the United States, sharing common concerns and learning from each other's accomplishments.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Federation structure is similar to that of the Ministry. For every Ministry Macro/Regional Office, there is the potential for the development of a BCFFPA Macro/Regional Council. For every Ministry District Office, there is potential for the development of a Local Foster Parents' Association.

The BCFFPA is a registered non-profit charitable organization. All levels of the Federation subscribe to the BCFFPA Constitution & Bylaws

LOCAL ASSOCIATION: made up of foster parent members in a local community, with a local social worker liaison appointed by the Ministry's District Office. Each local association has an executive, holds regular meetings and corresponds directly with their Macro/Regional or Macro Council.

A new local association can be formed by five active foster parent members in good standing providing there is no existing active local in the community. The Macro/Regional council and local foster parents will determine the number of local associations in communities with more than one district office.

The work of local associations is vital to the well being of local foster parents and to the success of the Federation. The impact the Federation can make on developing a better foster care system is dependent on the input from individual foster parents in all parts of B.C. As local associations are effectively developed, the collective voice, on behalf of foster families and foster children throughout the province is far more accurately represented.

MACRO/REGIONAL COUNCIL: made up of foster parent members from each local association in the region with a Macro/Regional social worker liaison appointed by the Ministry's Macro/Regional office.

Initially, the Macro/Regional council executive may be appointed from within the group of local association representatives. An Annual General Meeting must be held each year thereafter, with the general membership electing the executive from throughout the region. As well, each local association will have two local representatives appointed or elected from their association who are voting members of the council. In the case of a Macro Macro/Regional Council, each local will have one representative attending these meetings. The executive for the Macro Region will be elected from this pool.

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE: is made up of

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- 5 Macro Region Delegates

The Officers of the Federation shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Officer Candidates are elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting and through a combination of mail-in votes. The Macro/Regional Delegates shall be elected or appointed within their macro regions and will represent the foster parents of those regions at the provincial table. Associate Members, selected to hold positions on the Federation Board of Directors, shall have full voting privileges during their term of office.

The Provincial Executive is the governing body, legally charged with the direct control and operation of the Federation. It is the final authority on all matters affecting the organization.

A provincial social worker liaison is appointed by the Ministry's Child Protection Division in Victoria.

## FINANCING THE FEDERATION'S WORK:

The Federation contracts with the Ministry to provide specific services for foster parents

The Federation raises additional funds for services to foster parents and children through membership fees, fundraising initiatives and donations.

## MEMBERSHIP:

Membership in the Federation entitles the members to:

- Input into lobbying initiatives, studies, surveys etc.
- Access to information on parenting and foster parent related topics
- Participate in and vote at all local meetings and the provincial Annual General Meeting (Policy & Procedures)
- Opportunity to nominate and elect executive members
- Participate in all foster parent training events and functions.
- Discounts at various retailers locally and provincially

There are four types of membership in the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations

- a) Foster Home Members
- b) Associate Members
- c) Honorary Life Members
- d) Honorary Members

## FOSTER HOME MEMBERSHIP - "Member in Good Standing"

1. A Foster Home Member is in Good Standing when membership dues and applications are received by the Federation office on, or prior to January 31 of the membership year.
3. Any BCFFPA member wishing to hold office at Local/Macro/Regional/Provincial level shall be a Foster Home Member in Good Standing, a Life Member, or an Associate member with specific skill sets who is selected by the nominating committee and may run for office and have all voting privileges only during their term of office.

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Associate membership is available to those persons in the community who support the work of the Federation and wish to participate in Federation activities. Associate members do not have voting privileges and are not able to hold office, unless selected to do so by the nominating committee, and voted into office by the membership at an AGM

## LIFE AND HONOURARY MEMBERSHIP

A lifetime membership is bestowed on individuals who have made an extraordinary contribution to Federation at the provincial level. The individuals can be Foster Parent or Associate members.

## STARTING A FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Foster Parent Associations may be developed in any community where there are 5 active foster parent members in good standing, who wish to do so.

### THE PREPARATION

Contact the provincial office of the BCFFPA to request organizational material and a list of paid up members in your community and for direction in applying for development funds.

Arrange a meeting with the Ministry Area Manager and/or District Supervisor to discuss your interest in developing a local association and the benefits of an association in your community.

Request the appointment of a member of Ministry staff who has group development skills to be consultant and liaison to the association.

### WHERE TO BEGIN

Set a date, time and place convenient to foster parents and the Ministry for a preliminary planning meeting.

STAGE 1: Set a date, time and place for the first meeting. Take the following into consideration:

- . Location convenient to most foster parents.
- . Adequate parking, on a bus route, etc.
- . Telephone number that can be left with babysitters.
- . Comfortable atmosphere, chairs, good ventilation.
- . Facilities for serving coffee, tea and juice (choice in beverages is a must).

Decide on a featured speaker or topic to be focused on. The BCFFPA Macro/Regional Delegate, or a Provincial Executive Member may be consulted and could be invited to attend to discuss the purpose and benefits of an association.

Another approach may be to propose that one existing need (e.g. recruitment, educational programs, etc.) become the initial focus for organizing an on-going local association.

### Plan your advertising.

Invite all foster parents in your community by mailing an interesting flyer or personal letter. Publicize the meeting thoroughly through the local newspaper, radio station and other community means.

Record names, addresses and phone numbers. Give out name tags.

Start the meeting on time, welcome everyone and give a brief outline of why they have been invited to the meeting. Hand out literature.

Introduce the guest speaker or the proposed topic for discussion.

Allow sufficient time for everyone present to introduce themselves and offer their ideas for future topics and/or focus of association.

Ask for volunteers to help in the preparation for the next meeting. Try to get everyone involved.

Set the date, time and place of the next meeting.

If a speaker has been invited, a thoughtful gesture would be to send the person a thank you card on behalf of the local foster parents' association as a token of appreciation.

## STAGE II:

After an average of two or three meetings, the association begins to take shape and it becomes necessary to establish some structure.

While the manner in which the group thrives may vary from extremely casual to very businesslike there is always a need for leadership and understanding of the larger organization (e.g. Macro/Regional Councils, Provincial Board of Directors and involvement of all members).

It becomes necessary to elect an executive either by mutual agreement or a formal vote. Watch for buried talent! Members with organizational skills or excellent potential to develop these skills, seldom come forward immediately.

## STAGE III:

Have variety in your program, speakers, films, discussion groups, field trips, small workshops, etc.

Don't overlook resource people within your own group, use your own members in programming when appropriate.

Have as many parents actively involved as you can.

Be sure your Representative to Macro/Regional Council is active and reports back, this is where many good ideas and information will come from.

Try having your Executive Meeting one hour in advance of the General Meeting in the same place, this eliminates the second night out for busy foster parents and enables other interested parents to come early and attend if they wish.

Consider these special events. An Annual Banquet, maybe honouring a foster family, or an achievement by a foster child. A picnic for all foster families. A Christmas party. A "bring and swap" evening for good outgrown clothing.

## MACRO/REGIONAL COUNCILS

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- . To assist in the development of local associations.
- . To review suggestions and recommendations put forward by local associations, and to collect facts for presentation to the Provincial Board of Directors when appropriate.
- . To provide a channel of communication between foster parents and the Macro/Regional Director in matters pertaining to a particular region.
- . To arrange Macro/Regional workshops and to assist local foster parent associations in providing training courses and workshops for their foster parents.
- . To share problem solving and educational opportunities with foster parents throughout the region.
- . Budgeting and administering funds allocated to the Macro/Regional Council.
- . To develop other aims and objectives pertinent to their region.

### SUGGESTED PROCESS

- . In Regions where there is a Regional Council each local associations appoints two members to represent them at the Macro/Regional Council. In areas who have Macro/Regional Councils, each local appoints one member to represent them at the Macro Council
- . The Macro/Regional Director of the Ministry should be asked to provide a social worker from the Macro/Regional office to act as a liaison for the Macro/Regional Council.
- . Initially, executive members of the Macro/Regional Council are appointed by agreement from within the appointed representatives. In following years it is required that elections be held at an annual meeting.
- . The executive should include President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer and one member at large.
- . These persons would represent the minimum requirement for an active Macro/Regional Council. However, each representative should take some responsibility and the duties could be expanded to include: membership, public relations, program or education, etc.
- . Macro/Regional Councils should try to meet a minimum of four times a year. An active Council may meet more frequently. Each council should strive to hold quality business meetings. (Federation Board of Directors meetings could be a model.)
- . In areas where no local association exists, the local office of the Ministry should be approached to:
  - encourage and solicit the assistance of foster parents to form a local association
  - invite foster parents from their area to be representatives to the Macro/Regional Council.
- . This should be followed up by personal contact with the foster parents either in an organizational meeting or individually. A follow-up letter should also be sent, thanking the local MCFD office.

## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL AND MACRO/REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

1. Each Macro/Regional/Area Council or Local Association shall uphold and observe the Constitution and By-Laws of the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations.
2. Each Macro/Regional/Area or Local Association shall carry out activities and programmes which are compatible with the general objectives of the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations.
3. Macro Regions, Regions, and Locals are governed by the Federation Constitution & Bylaws, Code of Ethics and Policy & Procedures. Macro Regions, Regions, and Locals may adapt procedures to meet the needs of their membership as long as it does not change the intent of Provincial Policy.
4. Regional or Macro/Regional Councils are accountable to the Provincial Board for all programs and practices they may develop. Locals are accountable to their Regional or Macro/Regional Council.
5. The Elected Directors' responsibilities (as outlined in the Provincial Board Orientation Manual ) are applicable to Regions, Macro/Regions and Locals.
6. A Macro/Regional Council is required to submit an accurate financial statement on a quarterly basis, to the Provincial Treasurer.
8. Financial Statements for Macro/Regional and Local Associations shall be submitted to the Federation office by June of each year.
9. Local and Macro/Regional Associations shall follow the Budgeting procedures as set out in the Budgeting and Bookkeeping materials available from the Federation.
10. Local, Regional, and Macro/Regional Associations will hold annual elections of officers.
11. Macro Macro/Regional Regional Councils and Local Associations shall adhere to the Procedure for Resolving Difficulties between Foster Parents/Social Workers; and the Protocol for Investigating Abuse Complaints in Foster Homes as established by the Federation and the Ministry.
12. Macro/Regional and Local Associations may call on the Provincial Office and Directors at any time for assistance in matters pertaining to foster care.

## TO KEEP ASSOCIATIONS ACTIVE AND GROWING

1. Work closely with your District Supervisor and/or Manager in a planned way. There must be a meaningful involvement with the Ministry so that we can talk together easily; share information; recruit a few homes; attend lectures, workshops, and conferences together: and together as a TEAM, tackle our more serious problems and concerns.
2. Work towards developing worthwhile programs (all types). To do this we need input from both sides - Local Association Membership and the Ministry.
3. Try to keep developing leadership talent. Leaders need to know a little about group development and meeting procedures.

Leadership can be developed by assuming a small responsibility at first and being willing to grow with it. Executive members should be aware of the duties of their positions and be willing to assume them.

- . Develop a well informed phoning committee. Provide time to discuss the techniques of phoning in regard to Association activities. This group will form the network necessary to an active association.
- . Foster parents and social workers should talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the Foster Care Program in their area. What are its goals; what is being realistic; what are the priorities, in other words, how do we TOGETHER, plan a program based on mutual trust and concern that will benefit all ---- child, foster parent, birth parent and social worker.
- . Get rid of any fear, mistrust or negative feelings that social workers and foster parents are enemies and not able to talk. Both should be able to talk without fear of jeopardizing their position as parent or worker.
- . Be interested in what is going on in other areas. Don't be afraid to exchange ideas, experiences, and information. Get to know your community resources.
- . Make your Association programs varied ---- educational and social, so that foster parents can fulfil two main objectives:
  1. to see their foster children through transition periods in life and;
  2. be willing and ready to improve their skills and expertise as a foster parent.
- . As an Association, strongly support ways to keep children in their own homes and be willing to work with the birth families.

Locals build an image in the Community - one of concern and pride, so foster children can develop their own feelings of self worth and obtain the respect that is rightfully theirs.

Foster Parents and Social Workers need to recognize and accept the role of each other, and by working together through and in our Associations, help the children and youth develop self-confidence.

## JOB DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

### OFFICERS

No person shall hold an office at the Provincial level of the BCFFPA unless they are a member in good standing of the BCFFPA

- a) The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation, and shall be responsible for the general management and supervision of the affairs and operations of all committees. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominating Committee. The President shall fulfil the duties as follows. Is the spokesperson for the association and is responsible for the general management of the association's affairs. Is ex-officio member of all committees.
- b) The Vice-President shall assist the President in the performance of his/her duties and shall, by appointment, assume all responsibilities of the President in the latter's absence.
- c) The Secretary shall maintain record books in which the, By-laws, Policy and Procedures Manual and Minutes are entered, with any amendments to these documents properly recorded, and to have current record books on hand at every Board Meeting. The Secretary shall fulfil the duties as printed in this Manual.
- d) The Treasurer shall be responsible in all matters pertaining to the funds of the Federation. The Treasurer shall be required to present a financial report each quarter and an audited report at the Annual General Meeting. Investigates and follows up on methods and applications for fundraising. The Treasurer shall fulfil the duties as printed in this Manual.
- e) The Regional Delegates shall act as the Liaison between the BCFFPA Board of Directors, BCFFPA local/macro Councils and Regional Foster Parent Support Agencies. Their duties shall be to share information and gather feedback when necessary to enhance communication between all groups. They may also be called upon to chair committees and represent the Federation at functions and meetings upon the request of the President

## JOB DESCRIPTION OF OFFICERS IN A LOCAL FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION OR MACRO/REGIONAL COUNCIL

### OFFICERS

No person shall hold an office at the Macro Macro/Regional, Macro/Regional or Local level of the BCFFPA unless they are a member in good standing of the BCFFPA

### PRESIDENT

Preside over all the meetings. A brief outline of this duty is:

- o Call the meetings to order
- o Announce the Meeting Agenda
- o Recognize members that wish to speak
- o Put to vote all motions and announce the results
- o Enforce order

### VICE-PRESIDENT

Assists the President as required. May also take responsibility for chairing a committee.

## SECRETARY

- o Takes the minutes at all meetings.
- o Keeps a record of meeting attendance.
- o Has a list of all committees and their members.
- o Does the correspondence for the association.
- o Notifies the executive of the meetings.
- o Custodian of all records and correspondence.
- o Notify the provincial office of the BCFFPA of all executive officers, names addresses and telephone numbers.

## TREASURER

- o Is responsible for depositing and withdrawing funds.
- o Keep a financial record of all transactions and brings an up to date report to each meeting.
- o Submit a monthly financial report to the Macro/Regional Area Council and where there is not a Macro/Regional Council Area to the Provincial Office of the BCFFPA
- o Makes an annual financial statement and submit copy for Provincial BCFFPA and Ministry officials. Refer to the Section on Summary of Accountability of Local and Macro/Regional Councils.

## LOCAL FOSTER PARENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE AREA/MACRO/REGIONAL COUNCIL

- o Shall take a report of the Local Association's activities to the Council Meetings.
- o Shall bring a report of the pertinent Macro/Regional/Macro Council business back to the Local Foster Parent meetings and shall collect or distribute information as needed by Macro/Regional/Macro Council from time to time.

These job descriptions are guidelines for running an effective Foster Parent Association. You can start a local foster parent association with five active foster parent members in good standing without designated officers. After start up, officers are appointed to fill the positions

Most people feel a part of an association and will continue to come if they are a participating member. Be aware of this and do not hesitate to ask people for their help. People will be more likely to help if the job is something they can do easily so utilize the skills people have, e.g. someone with accounting experience may be willing to be treasurer, very busy homemakers may be willing to bring a cake, etc.

Committees can be developed as they are needed. It is the Macro/Regional/Local President's duty to designate committees and ask for volunteers.

For a more detailed description of the officers' duties and meeting procedures consult "Roberts Rules of Order",.

## SOME DO'S AND DONT'S THAT MAY HELP

DONT have the first meeting or planning meeting in someone's house. Pick a central location, in a public building.

DO let people talk about their problems concerning fostering.

DONT be too alarmed if the first meetings are mainly complaining sessions.

DO lay down rules from the beginning regarding confidentiality. Know parents' history and whereabouts.

DONT have too many get-togethers that are just friendly little sessions. The president should try to be there with an agenda so that there is some structure.

DONT extend coffee meetings too long. A couple of hours is enough.

DONT ever give too much too fast. Always try to leave them wanting to come back, not glad to get out.

DO take time for your newcomers, even when it means going over and explaining very basic things.

DO try to have a main attraction once a month - a film, guest speaker, etc.

DO, after you get going, try to have a project to get everyone involved in. Once you see who is coming, go over your phoning list and call a few new people. Say, "We are doing a paper article, making a book, etc., I am sure you have some good ideas, could you come and help us, please?"

DONT get bogged down with fund raising.

DO, if you need money for special projects, see if your Macro/Regional/Macro Council. Write letters to all your charity clubs, Town Council, etc. State your needs and why. Offer them a guest speaker.

DO - if you receive funds carry out what you committed yourself to.

DONT make a habit, or allow time for, gossiping about your social workers. They are human too.

DO listen to people's problems, offer your opinion, but conclude by saying "call your social worker."

DONT get so sophisticated that you forget what a Foster Parent Association is all about. It is to help other foster parents, even if it means going over the same thing a hundred times.

DONT be too quick to award a position to someone, let them go slowly. They will figure out who goes where.

DO have your social worker tell new foster parents about your local association. See if your local could attach a letter to the foster parent contract agreement form. In this letter state what you have done, what you are doing, who to call for information, and offer transportation. They will receive newsletters, but Vancouver is a long way away.

DO check out the computer list to get all the names of foster parents in your area. Mail them a letter once or twice a year.

MEETINGS SHOULD BE STIMULATING, INVOLVING, ENJOYABLE, PRODUCTIVE, EXCITING,  
MOTIVATING, AND SATISFYING.

WHY MEETINGS?

- o To pass along and exchange important information
- o To attack and solve problems
- o To give opportunity for social contact
- o To add to educational and cultural backgrounds
- o To accomplish, or help bring about, the achievement of tangible ends.

SOME THINGS ALL MEETINGS HAVE (that will effect your decision making as you plan your meetings.)

- o All meetings have people involved; any number, any age, any background. Some motivated, some not.
- o All meetings have reasons for people coming together. There is a need to state your purpose in hoped-for outcomes. Foster parents should learn something new, make decisions and stimulate involvement.
- o All meetings have atmosphere. It is important to set the kind of atmosphere that will facilitate a productive meeting. This includes physical surroundings, arrangements, temperature of the room, the pattern of greeting, seating and meeting people, and the patterns of involvement or non-involvement during the meeting.
- o All meetings require space and place. It is important to think about the location, the size, the furniture, the acoustics, the facilities (parking, rest room, food, etc.). These all affect how comfortably and productively people can do their business.
- o All meetings have some kind of cost: room rental, notice of meeting, necessary written material. All meetings have beginnings and endings - very important to some, not so important to others. Chairmen must keep this in mind.
- o Important to think about, and plan meetings beforehand: ways to make the meeting interesting, materials needed. Most important is a planned program or agenda. The Chairman should have a carefully prepared agenda, with a copy for each member if possible. The person in charge has the responsibility of doing the planning and setting the agenda.

- TO PLAN:
- i) Think about the participants and members
  - ii) Think about the desirable outcomes of the meeting
  - iii) Set agenda of items to be discussed.

- o Important to keep minutes and records of meetings for future reference.
- o Important to note who is to do what and when, and for the Chairman to follow-up on these responsibilities.

HOW TO SET AN AGENDA

- o Re-read minutes of last meeting, making note of unfinished business.
- o Consider participants and outcomes.
- o List:
  - i) Re-reading and approval of minutes of last meeting by secretary;
  - ii) presentation of financial report - treasurer;
  - iii) business arising from minutes, those that won't be dealt with in items on the agenda;
  - iv) committee's reports;

- v) Other Business;
- vi) Next Meeting.

#### HOW IMPORTANT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE ?

- o Maintains order;
- o Facilitates a good meeting.

#### TO MAKE A MOTION

- o Address the Chairman
- o State motion - "move that...."
- o Another member seconds the motion, "I second the motion"
- o Chairman repeats the motion (with secretary's help if necessary) and calls for discussion: - "Is there any discussion?"
- o After discussion, the chairman puts the motion to a vote. All those in favour say "yes". Those opposed say, "no".
- o The Chairman counts (or judges) the votes and announces the outcome: The majority has voted in favour and the motion has passed, or vice-versa.

#### TO AMEND A MOTION

- o Member states his amending motion by saying how he wants to change the first, or main motion. An amendment must be made before the final vote is taken, of course.
- o Amendments may be made in any one of three ways.
  - i) by adding words
  - ii) by dropping words
  - iii) by substituting new words for some of the original words.
- o The same steps as listed under "To Make a Motion" are followed. If there are two amendments brought forward, the second amendment must be voted on first; then the first amendment is discussed and voted on and finally the original motion in its amended form.

#### RESPONSIBILITY OF CHAIRMAN

- o Arrange for meeting, time, place.
- o Arrange for notices of meeting to be sent or send them.
- o Set up agenda.
- o Set up, or arrange for setting up of room.
- o See that members have all written material necessary for meeting.
- o Call meeting to order.
- o Conduct business.
- o Call for motion of adjournment.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF SMALL MEETINGS

"The horror of that moment," the King went on,  
"I shall never, never forget!"

"You will though," the Queen said, "If you don't  
make a memorandum of it."

(Alice in Wonderland)

KEEP THAT IN MIND WHEN PARTICIPATING IN SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Formal minutes are not necessary, but a memo about what was concluded or decided will prevent "slipping back" and will point to what must be done next.

RECORD OF MEETING OF \_\_\_\_\_ held at

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

SUBJECT: (purpose of meeting)

CONCLUSIONS REACHED: (1)  
(2)  
(3)

Note - may not need both conclusions and decisions - depends on the meeting.

DECISION MADE: (1)  
(2)  
(3) etc.

FUTURE ACTION: (include when action to be taken and by whom)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of sender (recorder or leader)

c.c. All committee members

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT is the activity of an organization that is responsible for obtaining and effectively using the funds necessary for efficient operation.

### AN IMPORTANT AREA MESSAGE:

The BCFFPA Councils are charged with the responsibility of allocating monies received to the appropriate Local Foster Parent Associations. The Area Councils allocate the money to the local associations; but it is up to the local associations to spell out their short and long term needs for the year in their budget which is submitted annually to their Area Councils. Needs cannot be met unless they are known in advance through the process of budget submission. It is absolutely essential that this be done!

### BUDGET PLANNING looks to the future!

Budget Planning is the process by which an association looks to the future and discovers what its needs are going to be. Budget planning attaches \$ money value to these needs.

The first stage of any type of planning is the conscious and clear examination of the organization's objectives (purpose). Look at the constitution - refresh your memory. See where your association should be offering services to its members. ASK your members what they want! Have a meeting with 'PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE' as a majority item on your agenda.

Planning at all levels of the organization is desirable!

PLANS = BUDGET PLANNING and become the basis for decisions to be made in the future. (The real work comes later when you dig in to get the job done.)

### IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

The increased importance of planning in any organization is the direct result of the changing world in which we live. The alert up-to-date organization (including Local, Area and Macro/Regional Council and Federation) must continuously anticipate changes which will cause it to discard old ways and adopt new ones.

For example, changes in Ministry of Social Services policy will bring about the need to adopt new ways of doing things.

The MACRO/REGIONALIZATION of the Ministry of Children and Family Development puts emphasis on 'doing things in the Region' and encourages each Macro/Regional area to take responsibility for its own delivery of service instead of all decisions coming from Victoria.

This will affect Macro/Regional Council of Foster Parent Associations as it will encourage Macro/Regional activities - conferences, workshops, etc., where more foster parents from the local associations can benefit from the local (or reasonably close) learning experience. It will also promote closer involvement with M.C.F.D. staff in the Region.

Another aspect which is affecting planning is the constantly changing economic situation - prices continue to go up ! - the cost of living is zooming ! - unemployment is increasing !

## TIPS FOR PLANNING YOUR BUDGET

ALLOW a good period of preparation time to prepare your budget before budget submission deadline date.

- o Have your Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, etc.) meet to consider the needs defined by your membership. Setting aside this time for planning will avoid continual "fighting of fires" caused by the failure to think in advance and predict budget needs.
- o Set SHORT TERM NEEDS
- o Set LONG TERM NEEDS by separating all of the suggestions into three categories:

SHORT TERM:                      MUSTS                      POSSIBLE                      IMPROBABLE

LONG TERM:                      MUSTS                      POSSIBLE                      IMPROBABLE

- o Your association's greatest needs will rank as MUSTS. Your budget will be based on these. Keep your notes on these findings - you may want to look at them again next year at budget preparation time.
- o Your budget planning success will depend on our ability to convert into dollar cost the MUST needs of your association for the coming year.

Submit your projected budget to your Region/Area Council who will in turn review it, and issue monies to assist where possible. Locals are strongly encouraged to look at methods of fundraising going forward as there are no monies available from MCFD to pay for the running of locals.

## PRESS RELEASES

WHAT IT IS: a press release published in your local paper can do a lot of good advertising at no cost to you.

- o Any activity that a members does or takes part in can be used as a topic for a press release, such as - receiving a trophy, making a donation, having an open house, having a meeting, an important guest speaker, having a workshop, a staff appointment or accomplishment.
- o Even though the activity is not related to Fostering, you can get a plug in. For example, "Mr. Jones, a local foster parent, is seen greeting an exchange student from Japan". Or "Mrs. Brown, secretary of the local foster parent group, pours tea at the bazaar to raise money to sponsor a family of Boat People." (be sure that foster children are not identified if present in pictures)
- o A picture and names of the people involved should be included.

WHAT IT INCLUDES: the first paragraph should include:

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW

- o Mrs. Jones, secretary of the local Foster Parent Association, pours tea at the St. George's Church Bazaar, Saturday, May 4th, to raise money to sponsor a family of Boat People.
- o You can then go on to explain in more detail the bazaar and the family to be sponsored, the amount of money raised, etc.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE --- TYPED!!!

- o Double spaced on one side of a sheet of paper, date it, head it with the topic, at the bottom a name and phone number of contact person. Address it to the editor and clearly mark it NEWS RELEASE.

The purpose of a press release is to keep your name or the name of your organization in front of the public and to make as favourable an impression as possible.

Try to have the NEWS RELEASE ready before the activity takes place with copies to hand out to the press. If there is more than one local paper, don't sent identical reports --- reword them if possible.

## HOW TO PLAN A WORKSHOP

1. THEME
  - HAVE MEMBERS DISCUSS WHAT IT IS THEY WISH TO LEARN
  - DEVELOP THEME AROUND EXPRESSED NEEDS
2. PLAN
  - ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR GOOD PLANNING
  - DEVELOP A WORKING CALENDAR
    - A) MEETING SCHEDULE
    - B) CONTACTING RESOURCE PEOPLE
    - C) INVITING SPECIAL GUESTS
    - D) SENDING OUT INFORMATION BULLETIN FOLLOWED BY REGISTRATION FORMS
  - BUDGET - ITEMIZE ALL COSTS, ALLOW FOR SURPRISES
    - A) RENT
    - B) FOOD
    - C) TRAVEL
    - D) MATERIALS
    - E) HONORARIUMS, GIFTS
    - F) POSTAGE
  - SELECT APPROPRIATE RESOURCE PEOPLE,
  - SELECT LOCATION, CHECK OUT:
    - A) CONVENIENCE OF LOCATION
    - B) PARKING
    - C) EATING ARRANGEMENTS - MEALS AND/OR REFRESHMENTS
    - D) WASHROOMS
    - E) TELEPHONE
    - F) ATMOSPHERE
  - APPOINT DUTIES - MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK
    - A) CHAIRMAN/SECRETARY/TREASURER
    - B) REFRESHMENT CONVENOR
    - C) PUBLIC RELATIONS
    - D) PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENTS (INCLUDE CLEAN-UP)
    - E) PROGRAM
    - F) HOST OR HOSTESS
  - WHO WILL BE INVITED:
    - A) MEMBERS
    - B) OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
    - C) M.C.F.D. REPRESENTATIVE
    - D) OTHER DIGNITARIES - GENERAL PUBLIC
3. SET AN AGENDA