

October 2007

Dear Caregivers:

October is Foster Family Month. I would like to personally thank all caregivers for opening their homes and hearts so that children and youth can have a safe and nurturing place to grow and be productive members of their communities.

As you may be aware the BCFFPA has been holding Idea Forums for the past several months in various areas of the province. We were in Fort St John and Dawson Creek the week of September 11th. The Idea Forums held in these areas led to some very productive dialogue. Those attending these forums included Ed Berry from the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC, Dave Dakin and Karen Berry from the Provincial Foster Parent Support Line, Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks Executive Director, Jocelyn Helland, Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents Executive Director, Gary Mavis, Ralph Libby from Megson Fitzpatrick Insurance, and our Executive Director, Ellaine Ashby.

In addition to meeting with foster parents and Ministry staff, I also met with some key stakeholders including Acting Mayor of Dawson Creek, Marilyn Belak, Peace River South MLA, Blair Lekstrom, and Clara Skauge from Peace River North MLA Neufeld's office in Fort St John. We continue to work at raising the profile of Foster Parents in BC and the fostering profession in general.

The next Idea Forum will be November 8th at the Croatian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. We look forward to seeing many Foster Parents, Ministry and Agency staff, and other interested parties there.

We continue to work on many issues requested by our membership at our 2008 AGM including a reporting form to assess social workers when placements end, child and bed specific contracts, and Rights of Foster Parents. We will continue to meet regularly with Minister Christensen and others to make the views of foster parents known.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Rick Nelson the BCFFPA North Region Delegate for his valuable contributions over many years of involvement with the Board. Rick has tendered his resignation due to pressing commitments in his work and family life. Rick, you will be missed.

Sincerely,

Melanie Filiatrault