

RRDSSAB NEWS



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This Issues High-lights...

- Children's Services News
- Congratulations Joanne
- RRDSSAB Board Members
- Ontario Works News
- Child Care Update—Cont.
- Financial Assistance
- Non-Profit Housing News
- RRDSSAB Receives Award
- Land Ambulance News

Congratulations

Congratulations to Joanne Spence, Personnel & Policy Officer, who recently achieved her Certified Human Resource Professional (CHRP) designation. Joanne is to be commended for her hard work and excellent marks!



~Donna Dittaro, CAO

Children's Services News



The following is the final part of a three part series regarding information that can assist you in finding quality Child Care in order to meet your specific needs. This information can be accessed from www.gov.on.ca, under the *Children* tab. *Please note that Parts 1 & 2 are outlined in the September 2007 and January 2008 issues of the Rainy River DSSAB Newsletter now available on line at www.rrdssab.on.ca.

#3 WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN QUALITY CHILD CARE:

You've made the calls. You've narrowed down your search. Now you're ready to visit the programs you're considering.

It's very important to visit the home or child care centre before you enroll your child. If you are considering a home care program, you may want to schedule your visit during the day when you can see the children in action.

Whether you're visiting child care centres or home care programs, you'll want to talk with the caregivers, watch the children and staff and how they interact, and assess the physical setting. Here are some points to look for:

First Impressions

- Is the location clean and safe?
- Do the children seem happy and interested in what they're doing?
- Are the adults warm, friendly and responsive to the children?
- If you are considering a child care centre, is the licence clearly posted?
- Is there enough space for the number of children?
- Are there adequate napping and toilet facilities?
- Is there outdoor space for children's activities?
- Is the equipment and furniture in good condition?

The Daily Program

- What type of activities are there?
- What are the policies regarding nap time and toilet training?
- When do the children play outdoors?
- Are there structured and unstructured activities? Individual, small group and large group activities? Active and quiet times?
- Is there a variety of toys and books that are suited to the ages and interests of the children?
- If you are looking at home child care, does the provider take the children to activities outside of the home (for example, to an Ontario Early Years Centre)? If so, how do they get there?
- What happens when a child misbehaves or has a temper tantrum?

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RRDSSAB Board Members

Alberton:	Barb Cournoyer
Atikokan:	Dennis Brown
Chapple:	Peter Van Heyst
Dawson:	Linda Armstrong
Emo:	Gary Judson
Fort Frances:	Sharon Tibbs
Lake of the Woods:	Valarie Pizey (Vice-Chair)
LaVallee:	Jim Belluz
Morley:	Gary Gamsby
Rainy River:	Debbie Ewald
Rainy River East:	Michael Lewis (Chair)
Rainy River Central:	John Callan
Rainy River West:	Wade Desserre

excellence in Governance

Ontario Works Update

If you have a child, your social assistance will change after July 1, 2008.



The Ontario government has introduced a new non-taxable Ontario Child Benefit that will help low-income families provide for their children.

When monthly Ontario Child Benefit payments begin in July 2008, social assistance will change for families who have children under age 18.

If you do not have a child, the changes to social assistance will not affect you.

If you have a child under age 18, you will see these changes:

- The National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) will no longer be deducted from your social assistance payment.
- The “basic needs” amount for your child will be removed from social assistance.
- You will also no longer receive the Back-to-School Allowance and the Winter Clothing Allowance.

These changes mean:

- you will receive less from social assistance **but**
- your new monthly Ontario Child Benefit payment and your full NCBS will make up the difference.

Not everything is changing

You will continue to receive other help for your children through social assistance (such as shelter allowances and health benefits). You can also continue to claim some of your child care costs if you are working. The monthly amounts for Temporary Care Assistance and Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities will **not** change.

About the Ontario Child Benefit

The Ontario Child Benefit is a financial support for low-income families that you might still be eligible to receive when you **leave** social assistance. Starting in July 2008, if you are eligible, the Canada Revenue Agency will include your Ontario Child Benefit with your Canada Child Tax Benefit (includes NCBS) cheque/direct deposit. If you have a child under age 18, you are required to pursue the Ontario Child Benefit as a financial resource. This means you must file your income tax returns and register for the Canada Child Tax Benefit. Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program staff may ask you for documents to show you have done this.

If you are not receiving the Ontario Child Benefit, or are receiving less than the maximum amount of the Ontario Child Benefit, there is other help available to you.

~ Shelley Shute, Ontario Works Manager

Child Care Update—Cont.

Health, Nutrition & Safety

Are providers and staff trained in emergency first aid and CPR for the age of the children?

What are the procedures for distributing medication?

What happens when a child gets sick?

What are the procedures for disposing of diapers?

What procedures are followed in the case of emergency, illness, accident or fire?

Are snacks and meals supplied? Are they healthy and nutritious?

Are there policies in place for managing food allergies?

How is food stored, prepared and served?

Do the playpens and cribs meet current safety standards?

Are cleaning materials and medications stored out-of-reach of the children?

Staff Training & Staff-to-Child Ratios

How long have the director and staff members worked there?

What educational training have they had?

How many children does one person look after at any time during the day?

Administrative Policy

What are the hours of operation?

When are fees to be paid? In cash or by cheque?

What is the policy about paying for days when your child is sick, absent or on holidays?

Are there any other costs?

How much notice do you have to give if you are withdrawing from the program, or if your child will be absent for holidays?

If you have any questions about the above, please contact Kim Gardiman, Children’s Services Manager at (807) 274-5349, ext. 241.

~Kim Gardiman, Children’s Services Manager

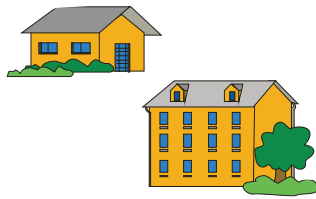
What happens when a child gets sick?



Are you in need of financial assistance?
Atikokan Call 597-1431
All Other Areas Call 274-5349

Non-Profit Housing Update

Rental Opportunity for Ontario Families



In order to assist a greater number of Ontario households, the *Rental Opportunity of Ontario Families* (ROOF) program is opening a second application window. Eligible families have a second chance to apply! ROOF is a financial supplement that will be given directly to eligible low-income working families to help pay their rent. They will receive up to \$100 a month from January 2008 for up to five years, provided they remain eligible for the program. You may be eligible for the program if you: earn income below \$20,000; have one or more dependent children under the age of 18; are paying more than 30% of income towards rent; are not receiving social assistance; are a resident of Ontario; and have less than \$10,000 in liquid assets. For more information, visit the website at www.Ontario.ca/ROOF or call toll free 1-888-544-5101 (TTY: 1-800-263-776).

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

As part of the 2008 Ontario Budget, our government announced a \$100 million investment to kick-start our new poverty-reduction strategy. Under this initiative, the *Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board* has been authorized to receive a grant of \$248,329.00. These funds are to be used for financing capital repairs for the social-housing properties in our portfolio or social-housing renewal, including energy-efficiency improvement.

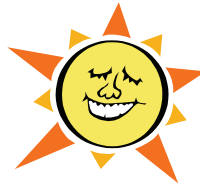
~Sandra Weir, Non-Profit Housing Manager

RRDSSAB Receives Award

On April 13, 2008, the Rainy River District Victim Services Program (RRDVSP) presented the RRDSSAB with a plaque "In recognition of RRDSSAB Board & Staff for their dedication & support as the Host Organization for RRDVSP prior to Incorporation." The RRDSSAB was the host agency and provided business support and guidance in implementing the RRDVSP in our community. An awards banquet was held at La Place Rendezvous recognizing the RRDSSAB, Founding Members and Volunteers. Judy Koski, Administrative Assistant accepted the award on behalf of the RRDSSAB.



~Joanne Spence, Personnel & Policy Officer



Happy Spring!

Land Ambulance News

Welcome to the newest paramedics in the Rainy River District, Jody Hamilton and Dan Lacheppelle. During the week of April 21st, Jody completed her initial training and base placements. Dan is scheduled to complete his training and placements during the week of May 5th. Once all training is completed and Ministry ID cards received, these paramedics will be joining our other casual paramedics in providing vacation, sick leave, & statutory holiday coverage throughout the year for our full-time staff.



Rainy River District EMS is continuing in efforts to ensure prompt, efficient patient care and improve patient records with the implementation of electronic records. Laptop computers are currently being installed in our

Efforts to ensure prompt, efficient, patient care

ambulances across the district for recording care provided to patients. The technology is not new, the Thunder Bay District, Superior North EMS has been using the technology for several years in the City of Thunder Bay and is currently expanding usage to the rural areas this year. Kenora District Services Board, Northwest EMS is also in the process of implementing the same technology. Once installed across the three districts we will have the unique opportunity to share statistics and consider other opportunities to further improve services.

Also new to our ambulances is the Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL). This equipment provides live feed to our Central Ambulance Dispatch Centre and gives them vehicle location throughout an ambulance call. With the installation of the laptops, paramedic crews will also have the opportunity to view maps showing the location of the request for ambulance service and the most appropriate route to the scene. We anticipate that we will see improvements in response times and better utilization of resources as a result of this initiative. Funding for the initiative was provided through the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

~Dan McCormick, Health Services Manager