NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO REGIONAL CHILD CARE COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

N.W.O.R.C.C.C. NEWS

NAME CHANGE

In order to better reflect the range of child care services offered in the Northwest, we have changed our name from the Northwestern Ontario Regional **Day** Care Committee to the Northwestern Ontario Regional **Child** Care Committee.

NEW ADDRESS !!!

The N.W.O.R.C.C.C. has moved to a new site. We are now located at 4A South Court St., office #7, in the Ruttan Building across from Eatons. Our **mailing address:**

P.O. Box 24037
70 N. Court St.
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 8A9

We are pleased to be in a larger, brighter space. Our phone and fax are now in fine working order. We apologize to those of you who had a difficult time trying to reach us this winter. Please give us a call and let us know what's happening in your area. The staff are now working part-time hours so if we are not in the office, please leave a message and we will get back to you.

Phone: 345-8803
Fax:345-8803

N.W.O.R.C.C.C. FALL FORUMS

The N.W.O.R.C.C.C. held public forums in the fall of 1994. The forums took place in Marathon on Oct. 1st and then again in Kenora on Oct. 29th.

The theme for the 1994 Regional Forums was "Supporting the Changing Needs of Families in Northwestern Ontario". The purpose of each forum was to facilitate regional discussions with providers, parents and advocates, encouraging them to voice their concerns on child care issues in Northwestern Ontario.

It was apparent from the discussions that old attitudes and values regarding the family, women and the workplace and child care still exist in Northwestern Ontario. In order to change these attitudes participants saw a need for more public education to help increase the number of child care advocates in Northwestern Ontario. ("strength in numbers"). Education on child care issues can empower individuals to influence and participate in the child care decisions that can effect their lives and those of their children. Participants then worked on developing an "action plan" to address these needs. They realized that they could help bring about positive change by talking to their family, friends, co-workers etc., about current child care issues. In this process they are helping to mobilize individuals to influence and

be a part of child care decisions in Ontario.

If you are interested in finding out more about the results of the Forum, contact Barbara or Joanne at the N.W.O.R.C.C.C. office (345-8803) to receive a copy of the Forum report.

N.W.O.R.D.C.C. Community Outreach

One of the N.W.O.R.C.C.C.'s goals for the 1995 year is to conduct community outreach in Northwestern Ontario. We have formed a working committee composed of Council members and an Outreach Co-ordinator. This committee will design a strategy for outreach to educate individuals and mobilize them on child care issues. The Outreach Committee will identify methods needed to achieve this goal, i.e. a video on child care in the North.

The Royal Commission On Learning

The Royal Commission on Learning is recommending that school boards provide both half and full day Early Childhood Education programs for all three to five year olds. This program would be operating under the Ministry of Education and would expand on the current Junior and senior kindergarten to cover a whole day. It co-ordinates child care and educational services. It is designed to help eliminate the problem of the divided day for children in kindergarten, who often have two to four different care givers a day, creating a "seamless" day for children and their parents. The program is optional, parents do not have to enrol their children.

There would be no charge for the program during the regular school day from 9am to 3:30 pm. Fees would be charged for those needing extended day care from 7-9 am and 3:30-6 pm. Child care subsidies would still be available for those who are eligible.

Pilot Projects involving 4 - 5 year olds will begin in Ontario in the Fall of 1995. Children will be taught by a combination of E.C.E.'s, certified teachers and teaching assistants. The projects will last five years and will include an ongoing evaluation during that period.

The Ministry of Education and Training is inviting school boards to apply for the pilot projects this spring.

While the NWORDCC council applauds any steps towards universal, publicly funded Early childhood Education, we also have a number of concerns regarding the Royal Commissions recommendations. They include the following:

. That all children would be respected for their individual development

. The programs provide a publicly funded seamless day for children

. Both parents and educators must work together as a team to insure the quality of the programs.

. Parents would have to be part of the pilot projects evaluation process

. That the ratios would not exceed the maximum of 1/12.

. The governing body of these programs include parents, providers and advocates

. No existing community bodies such as Day Cares disappear

. Clearly written job descriptions would exist for the successful integration of E.C.E.'s and teachers.

. Tenure security for policy around maintaining existing child care space in schools

If you have any concerns around the Royal Commissions' recommendations, The NWORCCC would like to hear them. Our FAX # is 345-8803.