



*April 30, 2009*

## **Province increases support for foster parents**

*Edmonton...* Alberta foster parents and kinship caregivers will receive increased financial support from the Alberta government to help them continue providing high quality care to the children and youth they support.

“Foster parents in our province do a terrific job of caring for some of our most vulnerable young people,” said Janis Tarchuk, Minister of Children and Youth Services. “We are committed to supporting the important work they do and this funding increase will help ensure they can continue to provide that safe and stable place for these children and youth to call home.”

An additional \$2.1-million in funding includes:

- A 2.5 percent increase to basic maintenance rates for all age groups.
- An additional increase of 10 percent to the basic maintenance rate for infants (under age two) in recognition of the increased costs associated with providing basic maintenance items for this age group, such as formula and diapers.

In addition to financial assistance, foster parents will continue to receive a number of other supports, including ongoing training, respite care, vacation and recreation allowances. With these increases, Alberta remains among the top provinces in the country for foster care compensation. On average, Children and Youth Services provides about \$1,380 per month per child to help foster parents meet the needs of the children in their care.

“Foster parents play an invaluable role in providing safe and nurturing homes to children,” said Norm Brownell, President of the Alberta Foster Parent Association (AFPA). “This increase will help Alberta foster parents do what they do best by opening their homes to vulnerable children.”

The increases are the result of recent discussions between Alberta Children and Youth Services and the AFPA. The province and the AFPA work together on an annual basis to determine how government can best support foster parents in their important role.

For more information about the foster care program and foster care compensation rates, visit [www.child.alberta.ca/fostercare](http://www.child.alberta.ca/fostercare).

There are about 4,600 foster children in 2,300 foster homes across the province. In October 2008, the government launched a campaign to recruit more for foster parents and Aboriginal caregivers. The campaign has resulted in 171 new homes being approved so far. Albertans interested in becoming foster parents are encouraged to visit [www.FosterCareAlberta.ca](http://www.FosterCareAlberta.ca) for more information.

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