

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Child Care Provider Appreciation Day is May 6

BISMARCK, N.D. – Child care is vital to children, their working parents and our state’s economy. Child care providers are dedicated, compassionate and have strong family values. In honor of their contributions, Governor Jack Dalrymple has proclaimed May 6, 2011, Provider Appreciation Day.

“Child care providers and pre-school teachers offer vital support to working parents,” said Carol K. Olson, executive director of the N.D. Department of Human Services. “They do a tremendous job of providing care and early learning experiences for thousands of North Dakota children and deserve our gratitude and recognition.”

Olson said parents have the option of choosing from a variety of care giving situations including licensed providers and unlicensed providers such as relatives, friends or neighbors.

The Department of Human Services regulates some child care providers including licensed, unlicensed self-declared and unlicensed “approved relative” providers. The agency also establishes standards and provides training and education to child care providers.

According to the department, there are about 1,663 licensed child care providers, 530 unlicensed self-declared providers, and 649 unlicensed “approved relative” providers in the state. In 2009, an estimated 110,866 children in North Dakota were age 13 or younger according to the Census Bureau.

Licensed child care providers care for children in homes, centers, and pre-schools, as well as in after-school care programs. In North Dakota, they undergo sexual offender and child abuse and neglect background checks, as well as initial and ongoing health and safety inspections. All new licensed providers receive a fingerprint background check. They also participate in ongoing training.

Approved relative providers care for relative children who qualify for child care assistance. They are unlicensed, but undergo North Dakota’s sexual offender background checks.

Self-declared providers are unlicensed, declare that they comply with some health and safety standards, and undergo the state sexual offender and child abuse and neglect background checks. All new self-declared providers receive a fingerprint background check. Both approved relative and self-declared child care providers are not inspected or monitored unless county officials receive a complaint.

In addition, the Tribes in North Dakota register and license tribal child care providers.

For more information on early childhood services, visit www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childcare/.

The Governor’s Child Care Provider Appreciation Day proclamation can be viewed on the Web at <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childcare/>.

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