

**NEWS from the ND Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 2, 2011**

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Agencies work to address child care needs as flooding unfolds

BISMARCK, N.D. - The N.D. Department of Human Services, county social service offices and Child Care Resource and Referral are working together to help address child care needs in Minot and Bismarck-Mandan as flood fighting efforts and evacuations impact residents. **In Minot, an estimated 29 child care programs caring for about 311 children have closed due to the mandatory evacuation.**

In Bismarck-Mandan, no licensed child care programs have reported closing or relocating at this time. Agencies continue to monitor the situation. Licensed providers should report relocations or closures to Child Care Resource and Referral at 1-800-450-7801.

“Our current focus is on assisting providers with relocating their programs, assisting parents in finding open child care spots in safe areas, and offering support to affected providers and families,” said Jennifer Barry, early childhood program administrator.

Barry said officials are prepared to be flexible in standards such as space requirements and license limits during the flood emergency. However, providers still need to maintain the appropriate number of staff to care for children.

“We have been able to identify some open child care slots in other programs in Minot,” said Heather Lau of Child Care Resource and Referral. “Some providers are graciously offering to open up homes and facilities to other providers so they can temporarily relocate and continue to operate their businesses.”

Montessori of Minot, for example, is closed for the summer and has volunteered to let displaced programs use their building. Interested providers should contact Minot’s Child Care Resource & Referral office at 1-800-450-7801.

Parents seeking licensed child care should call the resource and referral agency at 1-800-450-7801.

MINOT Drop-in Child Care

To support families, three licensed child care centers in Minot have opened short-term drop-in child care. Fees apply and service is available on weekdays.

Centers open from 6 – 10 p.m. include: ABC Child Care Center, 1105 16th St. NW – contact 852-6352, and Little Hands Loving Hearts, 3705 11th St SW – contact 852-5454. The YWCA Early Learning Center, 1000 3rd Street NE, will do drop-in care until 8 p.m.; contact 857-4023.

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