

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2016**

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Child Care Providers in Dickinson and Valley City Recognized with Make a Difference Awards

Gov. Dalrymple proclaims May 6 as Child Care Provider Appreciation Day

BISMARCK, N.D. – North Dakota early childhood service providers work to help shape the lives and futures of the children in their care. In conjunction with Child Care Provider Appreciation Day, the North Dakota Department of Human Services has recognized two licensed early childhood service providers with the *Make a Difference Award* for their work in enriching the lives of children and families.

KinderKidz, a licensed facility provider in **Dickinson**, and Shelly Differding, a licensed group provider in **Valley City**, were selected for this award based on their licensing compliance, commitment to improving program quality, efforts to meet the unique needs of all children in care, and other criteria.

“Child care providers, teachers, and other educators of young children everywhere deserve special recognition for their hard work and dedication in providing early learning experiences that children need to succeed in school and in life,” said Becky Eberhardt, the department’s early childhood services administrator. “We celebrate these providers for going above and beyond in the home and classroom, and in their communities.”

KinderKidz has been licensed as a child care center since 2008. The facility participated in a pilot project to incorporate Ages and Stages Questionnaire Developmental Screenings into their program, which tracks a child’s development through age five. KinderKidz has also benefited from the Inclusion Support Program that helps providers create and maintain an inclusive learning environment for children with special needs.

Staff from KinderKidz will receive their award during a recognition and training event sponsored by the Dickinson community on May 9, starting at 5:30 p.m., Mountain Time, at the Biesiot Activities Center, 291 Campus Drive, in Dickinson.

As a licensed child care group provider, Shelly Differding is able to provide care for up to 12 children. She has been licensed since June 1981. Differding has maintained a high level of excellence in licensing compliance for over three decades, and she remains committed to the community and the children and families she serves.

County social service early childhood licensers and child care consultants from Child Care Aware of North Dakota nominated providers for this award.

Eberhardt said there are about 1,600 licensed home, group, and facility child care providers and preschool and school-aged programs in the state, and there is support available to help individuals interested in starting a licensed child care business.

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Individuals interested in becoming a licensed child care provider should contact Child Care Aware of North Dakota at 800-997-8515, online at www.ndchildcare.org/, or contact their local county social services office child care licensing unit. County office contact information is online at www.nd.gov/dhs/locations/countysocialserv/.

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

The North Dakota Department of Human Services regulates these types of child care providers: licensed, unlicensed self-declared, and unlicensed “approved relative” providers. The agency also establishes standards and supports training and education of child care providers.

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

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