The Squamish Children’s Charter of Rights was created in the fall of 2016 with the help of hundreds of children. Children in all of Squamish’s public elementary schools, as well as some private schools, drew pictures about what they felt were their rights. From that activity, they then had the chance to vote on the most popular rights. The vote produced 11 rights and the children’s charter was created. The Charter can now be found in all schools and in many public venues in Squamish.

On January 17, 2017, council endorsed the Squamish Children’s Charter. The charter is a call to the community and decision-makers to support the well-being and unique needs of children. As a first step, the charter will be part of Squamish 2040, the Official Community Plan update. Its inclusion in the plan will help to apply a child and family lens to municipal policies, programs and practices to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of children and youth, and that children have a voice in the decisions that are relevant to and impact them.

The groups and agencies who contributed to this effort were Sea to Sky Community Services, Sea to Sky Putting Children’s First Initiative, the Early Years Centre, Child Care Resource and Referral, School District 48 and Squamish Nation. Funding support for this project was provided by Vancouver Coastal Health and the United Way of the Lower Mainland.

**Squamish Children’s Charter**

- I have the right to a family and friends.
- I have the right to survive. I have the right to a warm home, to food, to clothing and to sleep.
- I have the right to a clean environment, including fresh air and fresh water.
- I have the right to peace, to be free and to live in a safe world.
- I have the right to choice, to my own beliefs and be happy and to love who I want and to be loved.
- I have the right to play, to exercise and to recreation. I have the right to nature, to be outside, to explore, to imagine and to create.
- I have the right to be who I want and to be respected for it. I have the right to express myself, to have a voice, to speak out and to be included.
- I have the right to safety and to feel safe, to trust someone and the right to privacy.
- I have the right to an education.
- I have the right to health care.
- I have the right to have equal rights and to know that I have rights.

**Learn more**

Visit [www.seatoskykids.ca](http://www.seatoskykids.ca) to view the video.
Highlight Child Care Month

Spring has finally arrived. After a long, dark, and dreary winter, longer and warmer days feel so good! Spring also means that with the arrival of May, it’s time to support child care month.

We hope that you will take the time to celebrate, for despite its challenges, the rewards of being part of the early childhood profession are many. As child care providers, we have the opportunity to work with so many children and families. Our knowledge and experience can help us to strengthen and monitor children’s development, work with families to access services such as child care subsidy and child development programs, and advocate for government, from the municipal to the federal level, to support child care. Our knowledge of child development contributes to enjoying the success that comes when children grow and learn.

In this issue’s child care provider profile, Kari Gaudet of the Whistler Children’s Centre (WCC) notes that part of the reward for her of working in the childcare field is having a connection to many families in the community and knowing that the WCC contributed to the growth and development of the children in those families.

It’s an experience that we can relate to. For those of us who have been in the childcare field long enough, many of us have probably experienced seeing someone we knew as a young child, now out in the community as a successful teen or adult. Perhaps we can’t help but reflect on how we were a part of helping this person develop and grow.

Our role as child care providers is so important. By nurturing children, we are also helping to nurture families, who rely on us to provide safe, thoughtful, and professional care. By working hard to provide nurturing guidance and support to families, we are working to create and support a healthy village.

Yet while we work so hard to nurture others, let’s also remember to nurture and care for ourselves by taking time for activities away from our roles as care providers that allow us to refresh, rejuvenate and reflect so that we can bring our best selves to our work with children.

May 18 is Child Care Provider Appreciation Day
The Whistler Children’s Centre is a licensed group centre that has been in operation since 1991. The centre is home to the Dandelions infant program, the Sprouts toddler program, the Periwinkles program for three- and four-year olds and the Marmots program for four- and five-year-olds.

The centre’s kindercare program, with the children attending as part of the Marmot’s program, will wind down by July 1. The Resort Municipality of Whistler offers a licensed kindercare program.

Kari Gaudet, who began her career teaching preschool in West Vancouver, is the executive director of the WCC, a position she has held for nine of her 17 years at the centre.

The centre’s written philosophy states that “Our approach to children focuses on respecting and nurturing the uniqueness of each child and helping them to reach their potential – physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally,” with a goal to also establish strong relationships with the children and their families.

Kari says that consistency in daycare is difficult in Whistler because of staff turnover, families who come and go and whose schedules change because of work, ski school, etc.

“Our norm is changing enrolment, month to month.”

“The centre is very busy, there’s no doubt about it, and our waitlist is long.”

The centre has 17 staff. “We are just like everyone else” in terms of facing staffing challenges almost daily,” Kari said.

Based on comments from a recent annual survey given out to parents, Kari said that families love the staff, materials, toys and equipment. “They like the open communication; staff are attentive.”

One of her favourite quotes is from Fred Rogers, who said “Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”

As for her career choice of early childhood education, Kari says “it’s a very rewarding career, and having that connection to those families and seeing them in the community and knowing we were a part of that. Also, knowing that children who have required extra services and seeing where they are now, just flourishing.” As the saying goes, she added, “It takes a village to raise a child and we’re part of that.”
Activities

Spring rhymes and activities

Hello Spring
Hello spring,
Hello spring,
Hello spring.
We hope you're here to stay.

Replace the word "spring" with other spring words like green grass, robins, rainbow, flowers or butterflies.

May
May's a month of happy sounds,
The hum of buzzing bees,
The chirp of little baby birds
And the song of a gentle breeze.

My Spring Garden
Here is my little garden,
Some seeds I'm
Going to sow.
Here is my rake
To rake the ground,
Here is my handy hoe.
Here is the big
Round yellow sun,
The sun warms everything.
Here are the rain clouds
In the sky,
The birds will start to sing.
Little plants will
Wake up soon,
And lift their sleepy heads.
Little plants will
Grow and grow
From their warm earth beds.

Surprise
Close your eyes
And do not peek
And I'll rub "spring"
Across your cheek.
Soft as velvet
Smooth and sleek
Close your eyes
And do not peek.

Make Some Monsters
Blow paint monsters! All you need is paint, paper and a drinking straw. Add googly eyes and draw on mouths if you like too.

Coloured Rice
1. Pour one cup of rice into a container
2. Add one teaspoon of vinegar
3. Add as much food colouring as desired
4. Cover and shake vigorously
5. Check if coated well
6. Spread on paper towel to dry for an hour

Fruit Kabobs
It's fun to talk about all the ways the fruit could be arranged on the kabob sticks: by rainbow order (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet); buy the size of the pieces (largest to smallest or smallest to largest); patterned (pineapple, grape, strawberry, pineapple grape, strawberry); by the order it appears on the plate going clockwise; or random chaos (Whatever you pick up you put on the stick.)

Tie Dye with Baby Wipes
You'll need:
- Baby Wipes (Huggies Triple Clean Layers are thick and hold up well)
- Washable markers and/or liquid watercolors
- Paper towels
- Rubber bands

Pinch the center of the baby wipe and hold in your hand. Twist. Carefully attach a few rubber bands and have your child use a marker to color the sections of the baby wipe. The more that the marker gets into the folds, the more vibrant the color will be. You can also use your liquid watercolors to gently drip color onto the sectioned wipe.; just make sure you do it over the sink. This makes for a richer color. Continue using other colors to complete the tie dye. Remove the rubber bands, gently unfold the baby wipe and lay on top of two pieces of paper towel until it has completely dried.
**RLNR interest continues to grow**

Interest in becoming a registered, license-not-required (RLNR) care provider in the Sea to Sky corridor continues to grow. With so many young families in the area, and daycare spaces at a premium, it’s an option worth considering for anyone who can see themselves working with young children. Looking after children at home can be especially appealing to parents who already have one or two children of their own.

In British Columbia, you are allowed to look after two children not related to you by blood or marriage, in addition to your own children, without a license from Vancouver Coastal Health. This is called License-Not-Required, or LNR care. As an LNR care provider, you can choose to register with the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Program and become a Registered, License-Not-Required, or RLNR care provider.

Other types of child care, such as family day care or group centres, become licensed through the regional health authority -- Vancouver Coastal Health in the Sea to Sky corridor.

Registering as an LNR means that a list of requirements must be met. These include two character references from the care provider, clear criminal record checks for everyone in the home 12 years or older, first aid, 20 hours of child care training to be completed within the first year of registration, and a health and safety home assessment.

To help care providers meet all of these requirements, CCRR staff are there to assist you every step of the way by providing information and support, along with home visits, to ensure that all of the items on the health and safety home assessment are checked off. The registration process can be completed fairly quickly.

Registration has its benefits. RLNRs are added to the CCRR child care referral list for their area, plus they have the peace of mind of knowing they have met all of the requirements necessary to provide quality child care at home. These assurances can also be passed along to the families that RLNRs work with.

To find out more about registering as an LNR child care provider, email Lisa in Squamish (lisa.mcintosh@sscs.ca) or Grace in Pemberton (grace.chadsey@sscs.ca).

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**Caregiver point of view:**

“What are your favourite spring activities?”

Nature walks, observing the changes in the forest, puddle jumping, busting out everybody’s bikes, and building obstacle tracks for biking!

- Sarah Reynolds, RLNR, Squamish

I’m loving that the ice and snow has gone – being in the yard is amazing! I’m really happy to be taking over the backyard and getting the bikes out!

- Lindsay Kingston, RLNR, Squamish
To register or enquire about these events, email Lisa: lisa.mcintosh@sscs.ca.

**May 6:** Child Safe First Aid in Squamish

**May 13:** Child Care Open House Self-Guided Tour. 10am-12 pm, Squamish.

A fun and educational way to learn about some child care providers’ services and spaces.

**May 27:** Children’s Health Fair. 10am-1pm, Brennan Park, Squamish. Drop-in and appointment kindergarten immunizations, community resources, bouncy castle, face painters and more!

**June 3:** Observation and Documentation Workshop

**June 4:** Child Safe First Aid in Squamish

Sally Jaeger (third from right) and her daughter Erica (fifth from right) presented a two-hour workshop at the Squamish Library in early March when they shared their passion for songs and storytelling with child care providers and other early childhood professionals. The workshop was offered by Child Care Resource and Referral. Lisa McIntosh, program coordinator, is at right; program assistants Grace Chadsey (back left) and Nicole Harper (front and right of Grace). Visit www.sallyjaeger.com for videos of songs and more to add to your repertoire.

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*The Link* is produced four times a year by the Child Care Resource and Referral program of Sea to Sky Community Services.

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