

Unionized child care circle grows

Children's Circle Childcare Society in Kamloops joins the BCGEU

The 14 workers at the Children's Circle Childcare Society in Kamloops have voted to join the BC Government and Service Employees' Union. The centre is set to open a second location which will soon add more members to the bargaining unit.

Early childhood educator and new BCGEU member Fran Richardson cites the union's lobbying efforts for a universal child care system as a key factor in her decision to join the BCGEU.

"That's what did it for me, along with the potential to move forward on fair wages and benefits for workers and quality standards for children. I want the government to understand that we're not going away, and they have to deal with these issues."

Richardson believes unionization allows child care providers "to speak together with a stronger voice."

Fellow new member Mona McAmmond also sees using the negotiating power of the union as a way to address the recruitment and retention crisis in child care. "The hope is to stabilize our workforce for the benefit of children and everyone. This means everyone receiving equal benefits and treatment and improvements in pay."

More than 100 people in Kamloops, primarily family child care providers, have also recently joined the BCGEU as special associate members.

"I want to welcome the new members who have joined our ranks in order to address their issues in the child care sector," says union president George Heyman.

"Early childhood educators merit better wages and benefits, and BC families deserve affordable access to quality early learning child care spaces. We look forward to continuing to work together to achieve this vision."

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