

# Make Children First

Annual Report 2019

The news that no one wanted to hear. Make Children First will no longer be a funded initiative after March 30, 2019.

After the initial shock that was felt after this news was shared throughout our early years community, we strategized and fought for our families and what we know they need. Although our phone calls, emails, letters and media pleas to MCFD did not change the outcome, we made our collective voice heard. Our community will surely miss what can be accomplished by our committed and dedicated group of early years professionals.

MCF continues to direct parents to our website for information, events and resources in our community. We are focused on providing current, evidence-based information to parents in ways that are convenient for them.

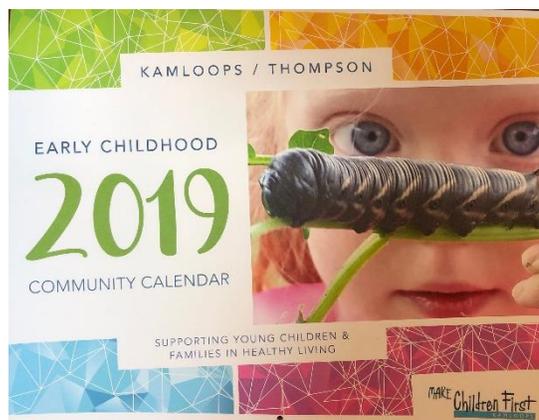
[www.makechildrenfirst.ca](http://www.makechildrenfirst.ca)

Analytics show social media messages can reach from 60 – 3000 people depending on topic and interest! Parents are very responsive to our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube content.



## What does your child want you to know?

*Our community theme in planning for 2018 was imagining the simple messages your child wants you to understand as they grow. Check out the 2019 calendar to see the top 12!*



## MCF Strategic Goals



1. **Enhance community education and awareness of the importance of the early years.**
2. **Facilitate, support and enhance a sustainable and collaborative system of community services.**
3. **Enhance existing and new systems and opportunities for early identification of children age 0 to 6 years old.**
4. **Support and encourage research and special projects for Early Childhood Development.**

*Make Children First (MCF) has initiated and facilitated Early Year's Community Development work in Kamloops for 16 years, with a total of over \$2,800,000 directed to improving the healthy development of children 0 to 6 years old.*

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In 2018, MCF had 52 stakeholders representing a variety of organizations who meet regularly to plan and facilitate community development work. The many meetings and workshops enable networking and collaborative opportunities amongst service providers, parents and stakeholders.



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## **Early Identification & Screening remains a priority for MCF 2018 Highlights:**

### **1. Developmental Screening & Strengthen Referral Pathway process**

- ASQ and ASQ:SE training sessions continue
- Promote use of Hand in Hand Developmental Planning tool to strengthen communication among service providers, physicians, child care system and families
- Collaborative planning for developmental screening of all children in care (0 – 6 years of age) & use of Hand in Hand Developmental Support planning tool

### **2. Coordinate Training /Education to Support Social Emotional Development**

- Infant Mental Health Community Training sessions x 2 (30 hours) for 75 participants from Kamloops/Cariboo/Shuswap area
- Participants included social workers, child care providers, early childhood professionals, mental health clinicians, public health nurses, foster parents, Licensing officer, students. Continuing Education credits provided.
- Challenging Behaviours Workshop, Addressing Sensory Processing & Emotional Issues in Early Childhood – Kim Barthel
- Website link access available to service providers and child care centres

### **3. Transition to Kindergarten for Family & Children**

- Provide information & opportunity for questions: curriculum, Aboriginal supports/resources, schools of choice, catchment areas, bussing, moving from childcare setting, language/cultural concerns
- Opportunity for parents to ask questions related to readiness for school
- Community Resource information tables are available
- School District Kindergarten Planning meetings are being utilized to arrange support at school entry

### **4. Support growth and development of Early Years Centre**

- Participants continue to increase
- Ensure coordination/ collaboration/information sharing among service providers
- Ensure programming reflects needs/demands expressed by stakeholders
  - i. Grandparents Raising Children Support Group
  - ii. Circle of Security continues to show demand
  - iii. Perinatal/Post-natal Services needs are higher
  - iv. Anxiety and depression supports for parents & young children

**Early Identification, intake and screening conversations continue to bring community partners together to improve the experience for parents and outcomes for children.**

MCF is a proud supporter of the **Breast Feeding Matters in Kamloops (BMIK)** committee formed through Public Health and part of our MCF structure. Some of the 2018 successes are:

Miracle Milk Stroll

Breastfeeding Celebration

Public Awareness of the importance  
of breastfeeding

Community education

Support to breastfeeding Mothers

BMIK sent **533 litres** of donor milk  
to BC Women's Milk Bank in 2018.  
Wow!



# SPARK

Strong, Prepared And Ready for Kindergarten

The SPARK program was a great success! MCF and the school district expanded this program in 2018 to include 13 schools with the help of our partners.

In true Kamloops fashion, this program showcases our unique ability to work together and apply best practices to benefit families in our community.

**SPARK aims to provide a better experience for children and families entering kindergarten by:**

- Increasing awareness of true "readiness"
- Alleviate parent and child anxiety about kindergarten
- Improve the transition to the school system from home or child care
- Identify children who need support

**The Kindergarten Round-Up Info Night is now a yearly event!**

## MCF Supports Childcare Providers

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Continued support to Laura Doan to continue the 'Peer-Support' program in the ECE Department at TRU.

Supporting childcare providers and administrators through professional development and networking

Ongoing financial support for the popular Creative Concepts in the Early Years Conference.