



Community Social Services Awareness Month proclaimed across BC

March 24, 2009

The campaign to raise awareness of the importance of community-based social services is being supported by municipal councils across BC. To date, 31 city councils have passed resolutions declaring March as Community Social Services Awareness Month, following presentations by local workers in the sector.

Related events include "The Value of Community Social Services" public forums in Kamloops on March 19, and in Prince George on March 24 (both from 7-9pm). The public is also invited to join in a five kilometre "Walk for Community Social Services" in Victoria, starting from Centennial Square at 11am on March 28.

In the Lower Mainland, workers are also planning to set up display tables at local malls to raise awareness. Community social services include child care, employment and housing support for people with developmental disabilities, specialized services for immigrant families, services for First Nations families, addiction services, support for women dealing with violence, and more.

Councils have recognized that community social services "help improve the quality of life for everyone" and that "greater recognition and understanding of the critical role these services play in our communities is needed to ensure their continued availability and improvement."

Councils passing the Community Social Services Awareness Month resolution include Burnaby, Campbell River, Central Saanich, City of North Vancouver, Colwood, Cranbrook, Duncan, Fort St. John, Kamloops, Kelowna, Ladysmith, Mission, Oak Bay, Parksville, Penticton, Pitt Meadows, Port Alberni, Port Moody, Powell River, Prince George, Richmond, Saanich, Squamish, Surrey, Terrace, Trail, Vancouver, Victoria, View Royal, Village of Belcarra, and Williams Lake.

In Terrace, over 300 people visited an informational mall display hosted by community social services worker Dorothy Bartsoff, on March 7. Community social services members also held a public forum on child care in Squamish on March 11.

Please see the www.CommunitySocialServicesMatter.ca website for more information. The Community Social Services Matter campaign is supported by the 15,000 workers who are part of the Community Social Services Bargaining Association.

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