

The Manitoba Child Care Association provides a wide variety of services, resources, and supports for those involved in early learning and child care in the Province of Manitoba. Our members, the public, and the media see us as the voice of child care, and turn to us for advocacy, for information, and for a response on issues of the day. We are known by our members and colleagues throughout Canada as the “MCCA”.

Our Early Years:

In 1974, the New Democratic Party, under the leadership of Premier Edward Schreyer, became involved in the development of a child care system, to be cost shared with the federal Canada Assistance Plan. The Government of Manitoba created the Child Day Care Program to oversee this developing system.

According to the Manitoba Child Care Association Newsletter, August 21, 1974:

The MCCA was established on May 11, 1974 at a meeting of day care parents, staff, and interested people who were all concerned with the effects of the Federal Provincial day care subsidy program on the quality of child care in Manitoba. This first meeting authorized a steering committee of 11 people – 6 parents and 5 staff – to: (1) communicate the general dissatisfaction of the members of the association to both Federal and Provincial Governments (2) to organize a meeting for early in June to elect an executive and (3) to draft a brief to the Honourable Saul Miller, Minister of Health and Social Development, outlining g our objections to the program in detail.

Records indicate that the first meeting of the Steering Committee was held May 14, 1974 at 796 Banning Street. Interim offices were established for Chairwoman: Margaret Black; Secretary: Brenda Fabel; and Treasurer: Lynda Mendalla. A bank account was opened and \$56.00 deposited. Agenda items included forming sub-committees on family day care, standards, lunch and after school care. The telegrams that were sent to government officials were read. The minutes read:

“the objective of our association is to take active interest and concern in all aspects of child care services for children from 1 day old to sixteen years in the Province of Manitoba and to bring together all interested personstogether”.

The name, Manitoba Child Care Association, was accepted at the second meeting held on May 23, 1974. The bank balance was down to \$32.00, and the minutes say “*the old day care association has donated \$29.00*”. Margaret was to ask Drew Perry to help with the membership drive, and there was a “*lively discussion on problems that should be put into the brief to the government*”.

It was suggested the membership fees be \$1.00 per year for an individual and \$5.00 per year for an organization. Memberships were to be non-transferable. The Head Office was 796 Banning St.

The First General Meeting of the MCCA was held June 8, 1974. Interim Executive members were:

Christine Buchanan	Lauranne Dowbiggin	Joan Long
Karen James	Lynda Mendella	Deb Blower
Marilyn Morrice	Sheila Sherban	Cathy Prygocki
Deidre Bonnycastle	Margaret Black	Drew Perry
Neil Hansen	Grace Muldrew	Laura Mills
Madelaine Doiron	Susan Schutz	

The meeting agenda says:

The Manitoba Child Care Association was initiated by concerned parents and staff. The main goal of the Association is to promote quality child care in Manitoba. The Association welcomes all interested persons to join. Together we have a louder voice.

Membership benefits of the new association included:

- A newsletter to inform members of the content of general meetings, workshops, other information pertinent to people interested in day care, the activities of the MCCA Board of Directors, and the changes in the Federal-Provincial Day Care Program
- An Advisory Council of five members which meets monthly with the Provincial Child Day Care Office to discuss aspects of the day care program, problems of individuals in the program, and to relay information
- Informative and problem oriented workshops and meetings as well as an annual meeting and conference in November

Growing Pains!

From 1974 until 1978, the MCCA grew slowly, relying on the efforts of a few volunteers to respond to government policy, plan and provide workshops and conferences, and publish a newsletter.

In 1977, the Community Day Care Study Commission began its investigations into all aspects of child care services in Manitoba. Almost everyone concerned with day care issues became involved, including members of the MCCA. Some members became politically active and others viewed political action as detrimental to the objectives of the Association. The MCCA Board of Directors had to decide whether to become political and advocate, or whether to remain a resource to members and concentrate on professional development. This debate resulted in a split in the membership and many left as a result.

MCCA reached a low point by late 1979, as membership was low with few active volunteers. The board approached the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg who did a needs analysis. A joint meeting was then held with the Winnipeg Foundation regarding funding. It was recommended “that a full time facilitator be hired to organize it into an effective, cohesive, and representative unit and to have it established with enough momentum to have it function smoothly”.¹

Slowly, the MCCA began to rebuild. In 1981, records show there were 100 members and an annual budget of \$16,400.00. Funding was provided by The Winnipeg Foundation to hire the first Executive Director and secure office space. The goal was to become financially self-sufficient.

By the fall of 1982, the MCCA has established the following goals:

1. To advocate for standards and guidelines beyond existing legislation that are designed to promote quality child care throughout the province
2. To facilitate increased awareness and involvement of child care providers, parents, and members of the general public in Manitoba, in the planning and implementation of child care services.
3. To promote a networking and information exchange between child related agencies and organizations, child care centres, and individuals, for the purpose of continuing professional development of child care services

In 1982, MCCA received federal funding for “Project Outreach” and conducted a random survey of child care centres, interviewing directors, child care workers, and parents throughout the Province. Based on the findings, MCCA decided to increase its efforts to lobby government for adequate salaries, benefits and working conditions for child care workers, and for adequate and equitable funding to individual child care facilities. With additional federal funds over the next year, new services included group liability insurance, preschool accident insurance, bulk purchasing, and information packages including personnel policies, job descriptions, staff evaluations, and board effectiveness.

¹ A Presentation To the Membership of the Manitoba Child Care Association Inc, October, 1984, Author unknown

Records show that as of October 30, 1984 the following insurance plans were in place:

Group Health and Life Benefits Plan

Agent: Dennis Duncan

Policyholder: Crown Life Insurance

Participants: 130

Group RRSP

Agent: Dennis Duncan

Policyholder: Manufacturer's Life Insurance

Participants: 14

Group Comprehensive Liability Insurance Plan

Agent: James F. Cox Insurance (Dave Morris)

Policyholder: Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation

Participants: 4

In 1984 documents, the following roles were identified, most of which remain relevant today:

1. Liaison

- between centres and governments
- between individuals
- between centres
- between community and general public

2. Lobbying and Advocacy

- initiated study group on provincial regulations
- coordinated local involvement in Second Canadian Conference on Day Care (1982)
- liaison between Manitoba community and two National Organizations for better day care

3. Continuing Education

- organize, facilitate, and coordinate upgrading workshops and seminars as required in the field
- liaison to university and community college departments
- annual conference and general meeting
- an overall and continuous goal to educate policy makers and the general public as to the potential benefits of high quality care for children

4. Direct Services

- group insurance and benefits program
- network: MCCA staff engages in extensive communications between individuals and other agencies and resource people
- consultation to caregivers, centres, and parents regarding legal, financial, and other matters on an on-going individual basis

Who Does MCCA Represent?

MCCA's report *BEYOND MINIMUM STANDARDS: Staff Working Conditions and Benefits in Manitoba Group Child Day Care Centre, (October 1983)* makes several recommendations related to the child care workforce. It also touches on an issue that has followed MCCA from the past into the present: who do we represent?

The report notes that MCCA

“has in the past tried to speak fairly for the concerns both of parent-users in the system, and parents wanting or needing more licensed care and both of staff in their expectations or appropriate benefits and management (directors and centre boards) caught in a monetary squeeze resulting from compliance with provincial funding regulations. Can the Association continue to lobby for an expansion in the quantity of licensed care in face of rising costs to centre budgets already stretched to the limit (and beyond)? Can the Association call for the immediate rectification of low wages and benefits in the knowledge that the present funding schedule requires those increased wages and benefits to come from increased user fees?”

From time to time, the issue of representation surfaces, but MCCA hasn't yet crossed the road into an area of specialization. Economics is usually the main factor, but also that the organization has become quite skilled at managing a wide range of services for a diverse membership. Additionally, the benefits of one voice speaking for the field are significant. The MCCA amalgamated with the Family Day Care Association in 1995, after several years of discussion between the two organizations.

In 2000, MCCA was approached by the Manitoba Government Employees Union to become the employer group for the centres that had chosen to unionize with MGEU. After much discussion and careful consideration over several years, the Board of Directors concluded that unionization is a decision to be made by the employees of each individual child care centre, and not by MCCA on their behalf. It was also recognized that, to avoid a conflict of interest, MCCA would have to relinquish the 90% of its membership that were not employers.

MGEU hired a former child care centre Director to be an organizer to promote unionization. She was successful in signing on around 80 child care centres. However,

MGEU was unable to achieve the goal of a common bargaining table for unionized programs, no union dues collected, no collective agreements developed, and the organizer was quietly re-assigned in 2009.

On the Road to Self Sufficiency

In the early 1980's, the Government of Manitoba began to develop legislated standards and a child care Act. MCCA presented at public hearings to promote standards that incorporated the principles of child development, parental involvement, partnership between government and the child care community and representation by MCCA.

The association also made itself available to help programs meet the new standards and training requirements, thereby providing an opportunity for our members, a service to the public, and acquiring enhanced skill in project management:

- it administered a \$2.5 million Core Area renovation project to upgrade 40 inner city centres
- from 1985 – 1987, MCCA administered the substitute component of the Child Care Worker Training Program, which enabled employed caregivers to receive 240 hours of formal training from Red River Community College, and receive a CCW II classification
- from 1986-87, MCCA administered reimbursement funds to child care centres participating in the Director Training Program, which was designed to enable centre directors upgrade to an CCW III
- the Child Care Worker Training Program '87 was initiated and administered by MCCA. Federal funding was acquired for 50 individuals to acquire a CCW II through training at the University of Winnipeg
- Training for Child Care (TCC'88) was also administered by MCCA. \$1.5 million in federal funding enabled us to purchase distance education for northern and rural caregivers and francophone training offered by Red River Community College and St. Boniface College.

MCCA was financially viable only because of the funding it received to implement projects, but staff had little time remaining for membership needs and issues. "*What is MCCA doing for me?*", was a common refrain (and is still sometimes heard today!). Project funding accounted for 94% of MCCA's operating budget and dues from members provided the remaining revenue. As project funds began to dwindle, the board needed a new approach. The membership fee structure changed from a centre fee, based on the number of licensed spaces that included a membership for all staff, to one where individuals had to purchase their own memberships.

By 1986, MCCA had successfully transitioned from project funding to membership funding. By 2005, MCCA's membership of just over 3000 represented over 60 percent of child care

professionals within Manitoba's licensed system. No other child care organization in Canada comes close to this degree of representation of its constituency.²

MCCA Members:

1980: 100 members
1986: 454 members
1992: 1770 members
1996: 1903 members
1999: 2600 members
2003: 2950 members
2006: 3694 members
2007: 3510 members
2010: 3762 members
2012: 3897 members
2013: 3809 members

Advocating for the Child Care Workforce and Quality Child Care:

In 1987, MCCA put down roots when it purchased a house on McGregor Street, and renovated it into office space. That same year, the Mansis Development Corporation Report determined that wages for an ECE II should be \$22,000 annually, based on skill and training requirements. Over the years, issues related to the child care workforce have been front and centre of the organization's advocacy efforts. A variety of strategies have been used to raise public awareness, lobby government, collect data, and educate members and stakeholders. One of the most public events was the October 17, 1989 Day of Demonstration organized by MCCA. Hundreds of child care programs closed their doors and caregivers, parents, and supporters lobbied the government for a funding increase. This resulted in the largest ever revenue package and significant gains in salary enhancement.

Other noteworthy activities over the decades include many salary survey's, campaigns such as our Worthy Wage, Peanut Day, Shoelace Day, research into legislative recognition, Taking Steps for Brighter Futures, petitions, rallies, letter writing, and bulletins. MCCA representatives participate in task forces, working groups, provincial and federal committees, and national projects. In particular, Manitoba's Regulatory Review Committee, established in 1996 to advise the provincial government, has had much success in effecting policy change and fostering enhancements to our child care system. MCCA is allowed three representatives on the "Reg Review" committee.

MCCA's most successful contribution to better wages and working conditions has been the Minimum Salary Guideline Wage Scales. Phase 1 was launched in 1999 and new and enhanced scales regularly followed. The name has evolved, but is now consistently called the Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Group Early Learning and Child Care Centres. Members eagerly adopted the wage scales as industry standard in Manitoba, however funding

² Review of Consideration in the Design of An Accreditation Agency, Don Ogston, Ph.D, January, 2006

falls several years behind affordability. In its early stages, the scales were used by the Government of Manitoba to identify funding increases required so that the majority of centres could afford to implement the most current scale. Funding increases began to lag in 2005/2006, at around the same time the federal/provincial funding agreement was terminated and the competitive salary range was identified.

By 2006, the average hourly wage of an ECE II was \$14.23 per hour³, up from \$9.49 per hour in 1998.⁴ MCCA has also successfully lobbied for ongoing grant increases for licensed family child care providers. Since 1998, preschool operating grants for centres have more than doubled and preschool grants for family child care providers are more than three times higher.

In 2009, the Government of Manitoba announced a Wage Adjustment Fund available to eligible centres to boost wages of an ECE to \$15.50 per hour and a CCA in ECE training to \$12.25 per hour. Their announcement also said “The Manitoba Child Care Program is developing the model for the proposed minimum wage base....” - a hint that they intend to expand their role in wage setting.

MCCA continues to raise the bar on wages and benefits by challenging the employer to provide a cost shared group benefits plan, a matching contribution to an RRSP, an allowance for professional development, and a portion or all of MCCA’s membership fees.⁵

From its inception, MCCA believed that quality care was at the heart of the matter. MCCA programs and services over the decades have continued to reflect that position. MCCA has partnered with many other groups and organizations, including women’s, professional, education, labour, service, and business. The association has a presence at rallies, is active in coalitions, made presentations, marched in parades, appears regularly on television, in the press, on the radio, and in the newspaper.

Professional Development

Throughout its history, MCCA has directed much energy into professional development to help members acquire knowledge, enhance skills and keep up to date with current trends and information related to quality early learning and child care. Workshops, conferences, bulletins, and our quarterly publication “Child Care Bridges” are a very popular and significant benefit of being an MCCA member.

In 1981, members in Westman region were first to begin working toward forming a branch, followed by Thompson, Norman, Central in 1990, South Central in 1991, Parklands in 1998, and Interlake in 2003. Our seven regional branches receive a rebate on their membership dues so their local boards of directors can provide workshops and conferences at the local level.

In 1989, MCCA established CATS (Consulting and Training Service) as an arms length organization. The most successful services were eventually integrated into MCCA’s core

³ Manitoba Child Care Program, Hourly Salaries in Manitoba 2005-2006

⁴ 1998 *You Bet I Care!*

⁵ MCCA Minimum Salary Guideline Scale Five for Group Child Care Centres, Phase In 2005 - 2007

operations in 1992. A Resource and Referral Service was launched in 1993 and many of the resources are still stocked in our current library.

The association provides many opportunities for members to contribute to the organization and enhance their own skills and professionalism through volunteerism. The MCCA Board of Directors has been the launch pad for several senior government bureaucrats in Manitoba, and has fostered the development of many respected leaders in the child care field.

MCCA staff provides support for many committees, which work to achieve their mandates with the expertise of member volunteers. Examples include Child Care Benefits, Finance, Ethics, Family Child Care, Public Policy and Professionalism, Board Operations and Development, Personnel, Conference, Editorial, and School Age.

MCCA promotes the development of networking events for a range of special area groups including administrators, inclusion specialists, infant and toddler caregivers, nursery school educators, foreign trained workers, and supervisors.

MCCA established our first award, The Dr. Gretta Brown Scholarship Award in 1989 and now has 7 additional recognition awards it presents annually to individuals or groups who have distinguished themselves with outstanding contributions to the child care profession.

MCCA continues to grow, evolve, and expand our services. Each annual report includes a detailed description of activities. However, there are important events in every history that stand out as milestones, new beginnings, and noteworthy dates. These may be of special interest to readers in the present, and in the future:

- 1989: Co-hosted the first National Child Care Conference
- 1991: Successful lobby for the exemption from Municipal and Education Tax Levy for non profit centres and nursery schools
- 1991: Initiated the Week of the Child Care Employee, later changed to Week of the ECE
- 1991: Burned the mortgage on MCCA House
- 1994: Produced "Employment Aids Binder" for child care centres
- 1995: Multicultural Project provides parent education videos and brochures in three languages
- 1996: Home Alone Campaign
- 1998: Crisis Response Manual published
- 1998: Code of Ethics Ratified
- 1999: First Directors Conference held
- 1999: First MCCA/Manitoba Child Care Program challenge event held
- 1999: FAS resource for ECE's produced
- 2000: First Managing and Leading in the Non-Profit Child Care Sector workshops presented
- 2000: First "Educaring" Conference co-hosted with Manitoba Association of School Trustees
- 2001: 77% of the 24,000 responses to the Vision for Child Care and Development in Manitoba were generated by MCCA sponsored activities
- 2001: MCCA leads the way to a national ethics project
- 2001: MCCA publishes Building the Career Corridor: Manitoba's Early Childhood Labour Market Strategy Project Report

2001: MCCA launched our first website.

2002: Grand opening of new MCCA offices at 2350 McPhillips St.
MCCA sponsored Dragon Boat Team: Three Hour Tour.

2003: Lobbied for the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care.
MCCA submitted a proposal for a Feasibility Study on Voluntary Accreditation.

2004: MCCA produced Privacy Policy Resources for Early Childhood Facilities.

2005: Celebrated the historic signing of the funding agreement on Early Learning and Child Care between the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba. Received funding for the Feasibility Study on Voluntary Accreditation on Manitoba's Licensed Child Care Facilities.

2006: Lobbied to maintain the 2005 funding agreement, cancelled by the newly elected Government of Canada.

2007: Feasibility Study on Voluntary Accreditation completed and resources distributed as a resource for licensed child care programs. Contracted with People *First* HR Services to develop a Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Group Child Care Centres, and to upgrade our Human Resource Management Guide for Early Childhood Programs. MCCA develops another strategic plan 2007 – 2010 and our first vision statement.

2008: Advocated to influence the second multi-year child care development plan: Family Choices Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care. Revised Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Group Child Care Centres 2008. Terminated group benefits plan with Great West Life and appointed Health Source Plus as our group benefits plan administrators; trained 11 new Ethics Guides; held a "Call for Action" on October 22, 2008 to draw attention to the childcare workforce shortage

2009: Re-introduced a group RRSP plan to be administered by Health Source Plus in partnership with Industrial Alliance; co-hosted 32nd Annual Conference with the Canadian Child Care Federation; produced Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Early Learning and Child Care Centres 2009; developed a first position statement on the integration of child care and education; produced a guideline pandemic plan, code of conduct, and use of technology policies for the Human Resource Management Guide for Early Learning and Child Care Programs.

2010: Developed and continued to refine position statement on Education and Early Learning and Care in Manitoba to reflect the growing trend toward integration of the two systems in other provinces. Also developed a policy Pension Plan for the Care Workforce in Manitoba and submitted it to the Government of Manitoba. Produced Market Competitive Salary Guideline Scale for Early Learning and Child Care Centres 2010. On October 7, 2010, the Minister of Family Services announced funding for the pension plan will be effective December 1, 2010. Worked with Industrial Alliance to offer a Simplified Money Purchase Pension Plan for MCCA members. Continued to learn about and identify a position statement on an apprenticeship model of ECE training. Working with legal counsel, the Board of Directors has revised MCCA By-Laws and By-Laws for Regional Branches for presentation to the membership at the AGM 2011. Professional development conference, director's conference, winter and fall workshops, 4 issues of Child Care Bridges, and joint membership with the Canadian Child Care Federation Continue. An Ethics retreat was held; Board of Directors and stakeholders develop strategic plan 2010-2013. Membership is steady at 3800 representing about 55% of the childcare workforce in Manitoba. MCCA remains financially stable and self-sustaining through a combination of

membership fees and fundraising through professional development and resource sales. Re-negotiated another 5 year lease with RBC and planning to make some tenants improvements.

2011: MCCA experienced a down turn in our revenue and had a net loss at year end. There are a number of reasons – the province has directed new funding to new facilities and existing facilities had to operate with very little new revenue. A few centres stopped paying their employees MCCA dues and rather than pay their own, the employees terminated their memberships. There was less money for professional development so attendance at our conference dropped significantly. There are more multi-site facilities with lots of employees and they are doing their own in-house professional development. Other groups and organizations are offering early childhood professional development. Our one day “institutes” continue to be well attended as is the Directors Conference, however they do not generate the same kind of revenue as conference. Revenue from resource sales are down as products for child care are now widely available. There was a federal and provincial election in 2011. The development of early learning and care hinges on the philosophy of the government in power, MCCA provided a variety of resources to keep our members informed. The Conservative Party was returned with a majority federally. MCCA hosted a provincial election forum on September 21, 2011. It was moderated by Richard Cloutier from CJOB and around 100 people were in attendance. The NDP government were re-elected for another term.

2012: The Honourable Jennifer Howard was named Minister of Family Services and Labour early in 2012. Her first announcement on child care was welcomed by facilities as it included a revenue package for both 2012 and 2013. Parent fees were to increase by \$1.00 per day in each year and the unit funding is to increase by 1% in each year. In addition, there is a commitment to develop a standardized wage scale. Other developing issues are full school day kindergarten; reduced class size commitment; the re-appearance of an apprenticeship model of ECE training; the likelihood of a change to ECE training and classifications.

2013: Membership participation has peaked and dipped at 3809 members, even though the size of the system continues to grow. Out of 2,592 ECE II's and III's, 1571 are MCCA members. Out of 4,475 CCA's, 1272 are MCCA members. MCCA learned about and spearheaded a campaign that led to the Manitoba School Boards Association defeating a resolution that would have granted school boards local autonomy to determine the feasibility of continuing commitments for educational spaces currently utilized by daycare and childcare centres in school buildings. Manitoba is falling behind other provinces that have articulated policy frameworks on early child development, in particular the integration of child care and education. Parent fees increase by \$1.00 per day and the unit funding to increase by 1% in July 2013. Expecting information on the provincial wage scale in 2013. The Child Care Human Resources Sector ceased operating in March, due to defunding of the Government of Canada.

Next milestone: MCCA's 40th anniversary will be celebrated in 2014.



**Manitoba Child Care
Association**

Mission Statement (1998)

To advocate for a quality system of child care, to advance early childhood education as a profession, and to provide services to our members.

Vision Statement (2007)

To promote and support an exceptional early learning and child care system by fuelling our members to be proud and excited to belong to a progressive, respected profession

Objectives

- promote and develop Manitoba's child care profession
- maintain financial independence as a non profit organization
- provide resources and services to members on a province wide basis
- advocate as a non-partisan, non sectarian organization at all levels of government for a quality child care system
- educate the public about child care as a profession and as a service
- build broad coalitions, bringing together those concerned with the welfare of children
- encourage the development and expansion of training, research, and educational resources to meet the community's child care needs
- promote and participate in the ongoing development of standards and guidelines and maintain quality child care services



**Manitoba Child Care
Association**

MCCA Chairpersons/Presidents 1974 – 2012

Presidents of the Board of Directors

Jodie Kehl (2012-2014)
Julie Skafffeld (2010-2012)
Michele Henderson (2008-2010)
Karen Ohlson (2004 – 2008)
Don Giesbrecht (2002 – 2004)
April Kalyniuk (2000 – 2002)
Michele Grant (1999-2000)
Michele Grant and Joanne Palanuk (1998)
Dawn Forbes (1994 – 1997)

Chairpersons of the Board of Directors

Pat Wege (1991 – 1994)
Carol Draper (1988 – 1991)
Milton Sussman (1984 – 1988)
Dawn Baturin (1983 – 1984)
Joanne Robinson (1982 – 1983)
Carol Draper (1981 – 1982)
Gary Thomlinson (1980 – 1981)
Brenda Paley (1979 – 1980)
Brenda Pringle (1977 – 1979)
Laura Mills (Nov, 1974 – 1977)
Margaret Black/Ranne Dowbiggan: (May – November, 1974)

Information compiled from MCCA records by Pat Wege, Executive Director
August, 2006 and updated 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013