

CARBERRY, MANITOBA

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Carberry Child Care Co-op

The Carberry Child Care Co-op (CCCC) is a non-profit organization that provides quality licensed childcare to families in Carberry, the RM of North Cypress, and surrounding areas. Thanks to dedicated volunteer fundraisers, the Co-op recently moved into a new 1.6 million dollar facility where both their Nursery School Program and Early Learning and Care Program are under one roof.

The trained staff offer flexible, comprehensive programming focused on children's mental, physical, and social development. As the only licensed childcare centre in Carberry, CCCC provides much needed care for children and peace-of-mind to local families.

The Co-op began in 1975 when members opened a Nursery School, which continues to run for two and a half hours, 2-3 times per week, and prepares children for Kindergarten in a structured, classroom-like environment. Decades after the Nursery School

first opened, a focus group performed a needs survey in the surrounding community and identified the population's need for additional childcare. After a strong effort by community fundraisers, the Co-op opened the Early Learning and Care Centre in 2005.

With more than 3,000 people living in the area, organizers wanted services to be available to as many families as possible. Towards achieving this vision, the CCCC created a wide range of flexible options and ensures that qualified families can access subsidies towards the programs. The Centre has programs for infants and pre-school children, and a new before-and-after-school program →



→ for older children. All programs provide a hot lunch, a nutritious snack in the morning and afternoon, and parents can choose the time frame for care that best suits their needs: full time, part time, or occasional care. CCCC is licensed for 15 nursery school children, 8 infants, 32 pre-schoolers, and 15 school age children. The Carberry Child Care Co-op currently has spaces available in all programs for those seeking childcare.

The Co-op is proudly built on community involvement and leadership. Parents must become members to use CCCC's services, while employees become members only if their children attend the centre. On average, they have 70 members who all have the right to vote for the volunteer board of directors. In accordance with Co-op principles, CCCC also supports other local services whenever possible. They buy supplies from locally owned stores and have contracts for lawn-care and cleaning services with local residents. As a non-profit co-operative, CCCC operates at cost, with a 2008 operating budget of \$304,864.

The Carberry Child Care Co-op is also creating jobs in this rural community and providing skill development and training opportunities for local

residents. They employ 11 full-time, four part-time, and numerous casual staff, including students during the summer. Through the Provincial Government's Workplace Training Program, three staff are currently attending college two days a week to upgrade from a Child Care Assistant to an Early Childhood Educator II. In addition, the director has earned a Management Degree in Early Childhood Education.

This training will allow employees to provide better services and earn a better wage.

CCCC will continue to contribute to Carberry's development, and the beneficial impacts are realized on many levels. Members are able to shape the Co-op's important services through democratic decision making. The

area profits from economic growth as the Centre employs local residents, uses local services, and allows more parents to work. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, local children benefit from an enhanced early start program that helps them bond with peers in fun, educational environments, while the same connections strengthen the staff, board, and families in the community.

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