



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Lack of Child Care in the Cowichan Region Critical and Getting Worse Report Reveals**

A draft report by Social Planning Cowichan reveals that child care in the Cowichan Region is in critical condition. There is a lack of quality licensed child care in the Cowichan Region with enough spaces to serve only 50% of the 4,862 children 12 and under who need child care. For the 1,047 children three and under who need child care there are only 120 licensed spaces – a shocking 11% of the number needed.

“It's an alarming situation that is worsening due to the current labour shortage and increasing cost of housing. Most families need two incomes to afford a home. Due to the lack of licensed, regulated care families are cobbling together unregulated child care with uneven quality,” said Social Planning Cowichan Chair Candace Spilsbury.

The report, which was commissioned by Social Planning Cowichan last spring, identifies three major causes to the child care crisis – lack of child care spaces, funding for child care services and staff recruitment and retention.

Right now the system is unwieldy and fragmented and isn't meeting the needs of families,” Spilsbury said. “There are strong economic consequences as well. If families can't find child care they can't work. That effects us all.”

The 56-page report offers several recommendations including the establishment of a Regional Child Care Council to give input to elected representatives and policy makers at all levels of government.

Social Planning Cowichan will be releasing the report at a free public forum and everyone is invited to attend to learn about the situation and to seek solutions to the child care crisis.

**When: Tuesday, October 2, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Where: Travelodge Silver Bridge Inn, 140 Trans Canada Hwy, Duncan**

**Everyone is welcome. For more information please call 746-1004**

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