



Child Care Multicultural Awareness Project

Farsi/Persian Information Sheet

Background Information

The advisory group participants were from Iran and the information presented here is only a description of these families.

- Iran is located in western Asia, between the Middle and Far East. It is surrounded by a number of countries including: Armenia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Turkey.
- Farsi (Persian) is the official language in Iran, which has a population of 70.1 million.
- Iran was formerly called Persia but this was changed in 1934.
- Iran is one of the top ten source countries of immigrants to BC (2003)
- Iran is very diverse in terms of language, culture and literacy level. Many Iranian immigrants who have come to Canada as “skilled workers” are highly educated. However, there are a number of Iranian immigrants residing in the Tri-Cities area who have come to Canada under the Convention Refugee Category who have a low literacy level.
- As a general rule families from Iran place a high importance on a child care provider being very gentle and nurturing and able to gain the trust of the child and the parents. The parent’s ability to separate from the child may be one of the biggest challenges in accessing child care services and both the child and parent may experience separation anxiety.

As a child care provider, you have an important role to play in not only helping newcomers to Canada feel welcome, but also assisting them to understand Canadian culture.

The following information has been gathered as part of the YMCA Child Care Resource and Referral Multicultural Awareness Project in partnership with the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (S.U.C.C.E.S.S.). This information should be viewed as a brief introduction to the Farsi/Persian community, rather than a comprehensive report.

This information sheet has been developed to help enhance a child care provider’s ability to provide culturally sensitive services by increasing awareness of the backgrounds of families coming to Canada from other countries and the issues and challenges they face. The facts and advice offered below were derived from multicultural advisory groups and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Early Childhood Development staff.



Farsi/Persian Information Sheet (con't)

Challenges for Families Needing Child Care in Canada:

- Like other newcomers, families from Iran will likely find the language barrier to be one of the biggest challenges. However, they were the only advisory group participants that said they were able to access some child care information in Farsi.
- The difficulties communicating important child care information will be compounded for some families who are illiterate.
- Language and culture is very important and finding Persian child care is preferred so the children can “communicate and understand”.
- Like all cultural groups, Persian families need information about available child care vacancies; understanding how the Canadian system works including the Child Care Regulations, system of monitoring, and available subsidies to assist with child care costs. The family may need somewhere to turn to for support to conduct a telephone or face-to-face interview with a prospective child care provider. They welcome information from friends who can refer them to a child care provider – they feel more trusting then.

Ways Child Care Providers Can Assist Farsi/Persian Families:

- It is important for a child care provider to communicate with parents about how they bring a new child into their program in such a way as to gain the child's trust. A parent will want to know their child feels safe and secure. They want to see that their child looks forward to going to child care and is not afraid.
- You will likely have to spend more time with Farsi speaking parents to ensure that they understand their role and responsibilities and how you run your program.
- If possible ask another parent that speaks Farsi to help you communicate important information.
- Be willing to learn some key words in Farsi to support the child/children in feeling comfortable in your program. Make sure you know how to pronounce the child's name properly.



Culturally Relevant Information for Child Care Providers

- Food should include fresh fruit and vegetables, not frozen.
- Guidance and discipline is of importance – “children should learn self discipline and self control.”
- Parents emphasized the importance of offering opportunities for children to feel safe/nurtured/loved. They also want their children encouraged to develop close relationships with other children.
- Parents emphasized the importance of child care services being free of discrimination.
- Parents expect to find competent, affectionate child care providers
- Farsi/Persian families may be “reserved” when sharing information about themselves.

Resources for Child Care Providers:

Currently there is a need to develop more resources that support newcomers and child care providers to make successful child care placements. You can help us add to this information sheet by telling us about how you have successfully overcome some of the challenges listed on this information sheet. Please contact the Child Care Resource and Referral Program at 604-521-3342.

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Multicultural Early Childhood Development Project

#2058 Henderson Place
1163 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam, B.C.
www.success.bc.ca

Farsi ECD Staff: 604-468-6023

Settlement Agencies

Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS)
www.issbc.org

ELSA Tri-Cities & Settlement Services

Phone: 604-942-1777
Vancouver Office: 604-684-7498
Burnaby location opening in late February 2006!

Call other offices for more information.

MOSIAC Multilingual Orientation Services Association for Immigrant Communities

Burnaby co-location office:
Ph: 604-292-1275 or 604-877-8606
New Westminster office:
604-522-3722

Vancouver office: 604-254-9626
www.mosaicbc.com

SUCCESS Settlement Services

Burnaby-Coquitlam Service Centre:
604-936-5900

Tri-City Service Centre: 604-468-6000

Burnaby Settlement Service:

604-430-1899 (Chinese)

604-430-4199 (Korean)

Vancouver Social Service Centre:
604-684-1628

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