



YMCA Child Care Resource & Referral  
Child Care Multicultural Awareness Project  
Korean Information Sheet

### Background Information

- Korea lies adjacent to China and Japan. It is 1% the physical size of Canada with a population of 48.4 million. The Korean language is the one language spoken.
- Education is the highest common priority.
- There is a highly concentrated Korean community in Burnaby and the Tri-City area.
- Like all families, Korean families are diverse and what they look for in a child care service will depend on individual needs and background.
- The child care system in Korea differs from the Canadian system in a number of ways. For example, child care programs in Korea offer much more structured learning activities than programs here and as well, they all provide a nutritious hot lunch.
- Parents in the Korean system are very involved in their child's learning and are able to monitor their progress through frequent reports from the child care provider.
- In Korea it is common for children to go to art, music, and English lessons as well as attending a child care program.
- Families trust the Korean child care system to be safe and the facilities there are monitored, well constructed, attractive, and age appropriate for the children they serve.
- The toys and equipment are of excellent quality and in good repair. The arts and crafts supplies are readily available and also of excellent variety and quality.
- Korean families, like all families, want their children to be well behaved and while young children are given a lot of freedom, parents instill values of respect and hard work through a loving and firm approach.

*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 Korean 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 that 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.*



# Korean Information Sheet (con't)

## Challenges for Families Needing Child Care in Canada:

- Korean families that need to access child care in Canada will likely find their biggest challenge to be the language barrier. This challenge will impact everything related to making a child care placement including: how to access information about available child care placements; understanding how the Canadian system works including the Child Care Regulations, system of monitoring, available subsidies to assist with child care costs; not knowing where to turn for support and lacking the ability or confidence to conduct a telephone or face to face interview with a prospective child care provider.
- For parents who have overcome the language barrier issues and have made a placement the challenges don't stop there. They will need assistance understanding how their child is learning through our Canadian system of play based programs rather than the structured programs they are used to. Korean parents are used to being involved in their child's program and will need help understanding how they can participate here.

## Ways Child Care Providers Can Assist Korean Families:

- If you determine that a Korean parent can speak and understand a little English try communicating in short sentences and speak slowly. A patient attitude and a friendly smile of encouragement will go a long way in putting a parent at ease.
- If a parent requests an interview and brings someone to translate for them it will be easier to explain how your program runs and your expectations. Korean parents will want to know as much as possible about the program.
- It would be helpful to the parent if you could explain how play is the foundation of developmental learning and assists children to be prepared for school. Staff of the Child Care Resource and Referral Program can provide information to help you with this.
- When explaining your policy about introducing a new child to the program it will be important to consider the needs of a child who does not speak or understand English. The parent may be anxious about how their child will be comforted in the strange environment – they may also want to tell you the Korean words for “pee, pee” if the child is being toilet trained, or water for a child who is thirsty.
- Creating a system for written communication regarding their child's experience in your program would be greatly appreciated by Korean parents.



## Culturally Relevant Information for Child Care Providers

- Snacks should be healthy and nutritious.
- Korean parents have a desire to participate in the child care program
- Korean children feel comfortable with physical contact.
- Korean children may be shy, but not lacking in confidence.
- Korean parents emphasize respect for adults.
- In the Korean culture, pecking order according to age is considered quite important in every relationship.
- Korean children, like all children of any ethnicity, need nurturing and good care.
- Korean families look for child care programs that are structured and academic in focus.
- Korean parents are accustomed to receiving written reports about their child's progress from child care programs in Korea.

## 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](http://www.success.bc.ca)

Korean ECD Staff: 604-468-6101

### Settlement Agencies

**Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS)**  
[www.issbc.org](http://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](http://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  
[www..success.bc.ca](http://www..success.bc.ca)

**YMCA Child Care Resource & Referral**  
Tri-Cities

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