



The Alberta
Child Care Professional

AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE



2012

Nomination Guidelines

**Government
of Alberta** ■



About The Awards

Alberta Human Services, in partnership with the Alberta Child Care Association, is pleased to present the 2012 Alberta Child Care Professional Awards of Excellence. The awards recognize professionals who work in licensed and approved child care settings and Parent Link Centres in communities across Alberta. Award recipients must create a quality care environment for pre-school and/or school-aged children and demonstrate excellence in four key areas:

1. support for children's development and well-being;
2. nurture the individuality of each child;
3. engage parents, families and communities as partners in the care and education of children; and
4. raise the profile of the child care field through their commitment to ongoing learning and development, and their willingness to share their knowledge with others.

Guidelines

The Alberta Child Care Professional Awards of Excellence program will be administered according to the following guidelines¹.

Nominators and nominees must comply with these guidelines, and will be deemed to have read and understood the requirements if they participate in the awards nomination process.

1. Award nominations can be made by individuals who:
 - live in Alberta;
 - are not related to the nominee; and
 - are not a member of the Awards Selection Committee.
2. Individuals may nominate child care professionals on their own behalf or on behalf of an Alberta-based organization or group. For example, a parent could nominate their child's day care professional directly or a day care board member could nominate a child care professional, on behalf of the board.
3. Nominations (including all supporting material) become the property of the Government of Alberta and will not be returned.
4. Nominations that are incomplete or do not comply with these guidelines may be disqualified. Alberta Human Services takes no responsibility for incomplete, inaccurate, lost or late nominations.
5. Nominees must meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the nomination package.
6. Nominations cannot be submitted without the permission of the nominee.
7. Individuals cannot be nominated for more than one award category. If more than one nomination is submitted for the same nominee in different categories, only the first nomination received will be considered.
8. By signing the nomination form, each nominator and nominee:
 - agrees to abide by the guidelines that govern the Alberta Child Care Professional Awards of Excellence;
 - consents to having his or her photograph taken for awards-related publicity purposes;
 - consents to the use of his or her name, community, photograph and nomination material in any awards-related publicity carried out by Alberta Human Services or other sponsors of the awards;
 - consents to the release of his or her name and address to the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and Members of Parliament (MPs) in his or her constituency; and
 - consents to participating in award-related activities and functions, including the Awards Ceremony, in the event that he or she is selected as one of the 12 award recipients.
9. In accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, personal information about nominators and nominees is collected for the sole purpose of administering the Alberta Child Care Professional Awards of Excellence. It will be used to select and publicize the achievements of award recipients.
10. For the purpose of these awards, the urban communities are: Airdrie, Brooks, Calgary, Camrose, Cold Lake, Edmonton, Fort Saskatchewan, Grande Prairie, Lacombe, Leduc, Lethbridge, Lloydminster, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Spruce Grove, St. Albert, Wetaskiwin, Sherwood Park and Fort McMurray. (See the Alberta Municipal Affairs website at www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca for a list of urban areas in Alberta.)
11. Decisions made by the Awards Selection Committee are final.

¹ Guidelines are subject to amendment by Alberta Human Services.

Award Categories

The awards celebrate child care professionals and their exceptional contributions in each of the following child care program categories:

Day Care (Two Awards)

- ▶ Licensed urban day care
- ▶ Licensed rural day care

Day Home (Two Awards)

- ▶ Approved urban family day home
- ▶ Approved rural family day home

Pre-school (Two Awards)

- ▶ Licensed urban pre-school
- ▶ Licensed rural pre-school

Out-of-School Care (Two Awards)

- ▶ Licensed urban out-of-school care program
- ▶ Licensed rural out-of-school care program

Special Needs (One Award)

- ▶ Care to children with special needs in a rural or urban approved family day home or licensed day care, pre-school or out-of-school care program, or in a Parent Link Centre.

Cultural Practices (One Award)

- ▶ Care provided to children in a rural or urban approved family day home, licensed day care, pre-school, out-of-school care, or Parent Link Centre designed to support the home language and cultural practices of children from Aboriginal or other ethnic communities.

Parent Link Centre (One Award)

- ▶ Early childhood programming and care provided to children in a rural or urban Parent Link Centre.

Alberta Child Care Association Leadership Award (One Award)

- ▶ Leadership as a child care professional provided in a rural or urban approved family day home or licensed day care, pre-school or out-of-school care program, or in a Parent Link Centre.

The Selection Process

Twelve award recipients are chosen by the Awards Selection Committee, which includes previous award recipients, representatives from organizations dedicated to quality child care and Child and Family Services Authority staff.

All nominators and nominees will receive a letter confirming that their nomination was received. Finalists will be notified by mail and the 12 award recipients will be contacted when selected. Award recipients will be honoured at an Awards Ceremony on the evening of April 27, 2012 in Edmonton.

Alberta Human Services will arrange for hotel accommodations and reimbursement for travel expenses for the 12 award recipients: expenses must be pre-approved by ministry staff and must fall within the Government of Alberta guidelines.

Eligibility Requirements

All Award Categories

To be eligible, all nominees must:

- ▶ have at least one year of experience as a child care professional;
- ▶ provide direct child care in a licensed Alberta day care, pre-school or out-of-school care program, or as an approved family day home provider, or provide early childhood programming and care in a Parent Link Centre; and
- ▶ demonstrate professional excellence in each of the following areas:
 1. supporting children's development and well-being;
 2. nurturing the individuality of each child;
 3. building partnerships with parents, families and communities; and
 4. raising the profile of the child care field through commitment to ongoing learning and development, and willingness to share knowledge with others.

Child Care Professionals

Nominated child care professionals working in licensed day care, pre-school or out-of-school care programs must be certified by the Alberta Child Care Staff Certification Office as a Child Development Assistant, a Child Development Worker, or a Child Development Supervisor. The staff registration number located on the certificate must be included on the nomination form.

Family Day Home Professionals

Nominated family day home professionals must operate in Alberta, under contract to a government-approved family day home agency or Child and Family Services Authority, and provide care and supervision to children 12 years of age and younger.

Special Needs

Nominees in this award category must provide care to at least one child with a diagnosed special need in a licensed or approved child care program.

Cultural Practices

Nominees in this award category must provide culturally-sensitive child care in a licensed or approved child care program designed to support the home language and cultural practices of children from Aboriginal or other ethnic communities.

Parent Link Centre Professional

Nominees in this award category must provide early childhood programming and care for children 12 years of age and younger and their families in a Parent Link Centre.

ACCA Leadership Award

Nominees in this award category must be working in a leadership role at a licensed or approved child care program or Parent Link Centre and must be certified by the Alberta Child Care Staff Certification Office as a Child Development Supervisor.

Supporting Information

For Nominees in all Award Categories

Attach a nomination letter that explains and provides specific examples of how the nominee demonstrates professional excellence in each of four categories below.

Your nomination letter should be a maximum of 600 words. Do not send photographs or other information that is not specifically requested on the nomination form.

Make your responses as specific as possible. For example, instead of saying your nominee is “good with children,” provide a concrete example: “When a Spanish-speaking boy from Cuba joined our program, Jessie recruited a volunteer to help bridge the language barrier and invited a well-known performer to sing with the children in Spanish.”

Eligible nominations are reviewed by the Awards Selection Committee based on the criteria outlined below.

The nomination letter should describe how the nominee demonstrates professional excellence in each of the following four areas:

1. The nominee supports the development and well-being of children by:
 - ▶ providing daily experiences that foster each child’s physical, social, language, cognitive, emotional and creative development;
 - ▶ recognizing and nurturing each child’s unique potential;
 - ▶ creating an engaging, stimulating learning environment responsive to children’s interests and participation; and
 - ▶ building and maintaining warm, trusting relationships with each child.
2. The nominee nurtures the individuality of each child by:
 - ▶ respecting and acknowledging each child’s abilities, home language, culture and family composition;
 - ▶ providing experiences that allow children to explore new ideas and learn about different traditions and cultures;
 - ▶ incorporating events and activities that are occurring in the children’s lives; and
 - ▶ incorporating local, community or national events in the child care setting.
3. The nominee engages parents, families and the community as partners in the care and education of the child by:
 - ▶ assisting parents in their role as the primary educator of their child;
 - ▶ building open, collaborative relationships with each child’s family;
 - ▶ fostering partnerships and/or community contacts that complement children’s activities and learning; and
 - ▶ developing partnerships with colleagues and community agencies in order to support families and help them access the programs and services they may need.
4. The nominee raises the profile of the child care field by:
 - ▶ pursuing personal growth and ongoing professional development;
 - ▶ translating new knowledge into creative, innovative practices that support child development;
 - ▶ developing and/or distributing learning materials and resources based on research in early learning and child care;
 - ▶ providing professional development training to other professionals or colleagues, including mentoring others in the field; and
 - ▶ being active in a professional organization, network or association related to child care.

Additional Requirements for Nominees in the Special Needs Category

Indicate the type of setting where the nominee works: licensed day care, pre-school, out-of-school care, approved family day home, or Parent Link Centre.

In the nomination letter, explain and provide examples of how the nominee:

- ▶ demonstrates creativity and innovation in adapting environments, materials and activities to support learning;
- ▶ demonstrates initiative to learn and apply current practice to meet the specific challenges of each individual child;
- ▶ encourages parents to utilize appropriate community information and services to support the family;
- ▶ demonstrates understanding of the unique challenges faced by the children and their parents; and
- ▶ creates an inclusive environment that fosters the development of peer relationships.

Additional Requirements for Nominees in the Cultural Practices Category

Indicate the type of setting where the nominee works: licensed day care, pre-school, out-of-school care, approved family day home, or Parent Link Centre.

In the nomination letter explain and provide examples of how the nominee provides culturally-sensitive child care to children from Aboriginal or ethnic communities by:

- ▶ demonstrating support to the home language of children from Aboriginal or ethnic communities;
- ▶ demonstrating creativity and innovation in integrating cultural practices into learning activities;
- ▶ facilitating opportunities for families to share cultural experiences; and
- ▶ incorporating Aboriginal or ethnic community members within the program.

Additional Requirements for Nominees in the Leadership Category

Indicate the type of setting where the nominee works: licensed day care, pre-school, out-of-school care, approved family day home, or Parent Link Centre. Provide the staff certification number located on the Alberta Child Care Staff Qualification Certificate to verify that he or she is certified as a Child Development Supervisor.

In the nomination letter, explain and provide examples of how the nominee demonstrates effective leadership by:

- ▶ maintaining effective, regular exchanges of information with staff, families and the community;
- ▶ ensuring that the program philosophy is evident in daily practice;
- ▶ conducting regular reviews of program practice that are responsive to the needs of children, staff, families and the community; and
- ▶ motivating staff to attend professional development and training and implement their learning in the program.



Nomination Form



Do You Know An Excellent Early Learning and Child Care Professional?

Help us say "Thanks for a job well done" by nominating an outstanding child care professional.

Contact Details (please print neatly)

About You (the Nominator)

First name: _____ Last name: _____
Address: _____ City/Town: _____ Postal code: _____
Telephone (day): _____ Telephone (evening): _____
E-mail address: _____
Connection to nominee: colleague employer know children in the nominee's care other (please specify) _____

About Your Organization (if applicable)

Are you making your nomination on behalf of an organization? Yes No (If YES, please provide the name and address of the organization)
Organization name: _____
Address: _____
City/Town: _____ Postal code: _____ Telephone: _____

Award Category please check one category only:

I am nominating a child care professional for the following award category:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> licensed urban day care | <input type="checkbox"/> licensed urban pre-school | <input type="checkbox"/> special needs (with supporting information, as specified) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> licensed rural day care | <input type="checkbox"/> licensed rural pre-school | <input type="checkbox"/> cultural practices (with supporting information, as specified) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> approved urban family day home | <input type="checkbox"/> licensed urban out-of-school care | <input type="checkbox"/> urban and rural parent link centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> approved rural family day home | <input type="checkbox"/> licensed rural out-of-school care | <input type="checkbox"/> leadership (with supporting information, as specified) |

About The Nominee

First name: _____ Last name: _____
Address: _____ City/Town: _____ Postal code: _____
Telephone (day): _____ Telephone (evening): _____
E-mail address: _____
Number of years in child care: _____
Child care certification or registration number (required for staff in day care, pre-school and out-of-school care programs): _____
Place of employment: _____ Position: _____
Employment address: _____ City/Town: _____ Postal code: _____

Current memberships (i.e. professional organization, network or association related to child care): _____

Other (i.e. professional development and/or volunteer activities): _____

Declarations

I have read and agree to abide by the guidelines outlined in the nomination package. The nominee meets all eligibility criteria outlined in the nomination package.

Nominator's signature: _____ Nominee's signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

Checklist: is your application complete?

- Nomination form completed: all information sections are filled in
- Letter of support is attached (maximum 600 words) and includes examples of how the nominee demonstrates professional excellence in each of the following areas:
 1. support children's development and well-being;
 2. nurture the individuality of each child;
 3. engage parents, families and communities as partners in the care and education of children; and
 4. raise the profile of the child care field through commitment to ongoing learning and development, and willingness to share knowledge with others.
- Additional requirements are included in the supporting letter for the special needs, cultural practices or leadership categories.
- Signed and dated by nominator
- Signed and dated by nominee

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Mail, fax or e-mail the completed nomination form, along with signatures and the required letter of support, to:

Alberta Child Care Professional Awards of Excellence
Alberta Human Services
Attn: Lorna Anton
6th Floor, 9940-106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2N2
Fax: 780-427-1258
E-mail: lorna.anton@gov.ab.ca

If you have any questions, please contact:

Lorna Anton at 780-415-2415 (can be accessed toll free by first dialing 310-0000).
E-mail: lorna.anton@gov.ab.ca

The deadline for nominations is **4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 17, 2012.**



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