

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

OCTOBER 29, 2008

FPSS Foster Parent Support Services Society



VICTORIA TO HOST INTERNATIONAL FOSTERING CONFERENCE

VICTORIA - More than 600 delegates from around the world will converge in Victoria when the city hosts the 2011 International Foster Care Organization (IFCO) conference.

Key representatives from B.C.'s leading Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal foster parent and family support agencies -- led by Foster Parent Support Services Society (FPSSS) and Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services -- worked in partnership to prepare the winning proposal. Letters of support for the bid came from throughout Canada and included those from the Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell, Children and Family Development Minister Tom Christensen, Victoria Mayor Alan Lowe and Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth.

The conference, themed "*Fostering Hope... Together We Can Make a Difference*", will take place July 10th to 15th, 2011 at the University of Victoria.

"We are absolutely thrilled to announce this - especially during Foster Family Month," says Margaret Howley, FPSSS Executive Director. "Shelly Johnson (former CEO of SCCFS) spearheaded this initiative, and all the other agencies from throughout B.C. readily came on board and worked collaboratively to produce the successful bid."

"This is a wonderful opportunity for learning, education and networking to support foster parents and children in foster care," she adds. "There is lots to be done, and we are looking forward to working with IFCO, B.C.'s Ministry of Children and Family Development and family-serving agencies in gaining the support necessary to show the world that British Columbia is not only a beautiful place to visit, but also a place where children and youth in foster care truly matter, and are strong, safe and supported to reach their full potential".

The International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO) is the only international network dedicated to the promotion and support of family foster care all over the world. The Victoria IFCO 2011 will be the 16th International conference. Previous IFCO gatherings were held in Malta (Regional); Hamilton, New Zealand (International); Bratislava Slovakia (Regional); Madison, Wisconsin (International); Prague, Czech Republic (Regional); Paramaribo Surinam (Regional); La Plata, Argentina (International); Tampere, Finland (Regional); and Veldhoven, the Netherlands.

For more information on the International Foster Care Organization, visit the IFCO web site at <http://www.ifco.info/>

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FYI—Breaking NEWS!!!

By Margaret C. Howley, Chairperson IFCO 2011 Committee

On behalf of the IFCO 2011 Proposal Bid Committee, I am thrilled to announce that we were successful in our bid to host the IFCO 2011 International Foster Care Conference, here in Victoria at Uvic! July of 2011 will see hundreds of delegates arrive for our five day conference “Fostering Hope ... Together we can make a difference”.

In his letter of support of our bid, I think the Honourable Tom Christensen, Minister of Children and Family Development summarized our vision beautifully:

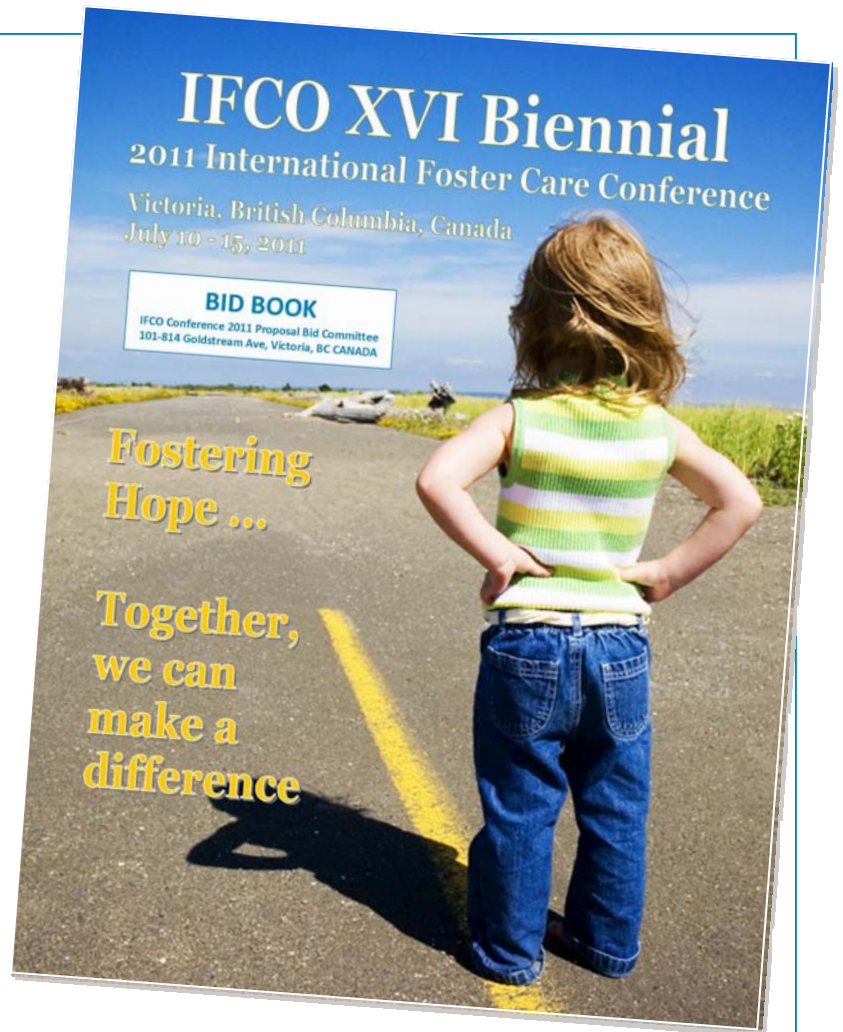
“The fostering system plays an integral and indispensable role in fulfilling the ministry’s vision that British Columbia’s children are strong, safe and supported to reach their full potential. Foster families open their homes to children living through turmoil and agencies like yours provide the kind of training and support needed to ensure the success of placements. Hosting an international conference in Victoria will provide wonderful opportunities for those involved in fostering, all the way from policy makers to the parents of children who are in foster care, to learn from one another in order to enhance the system and to enrich the lives of the children, youth and families involved.

I wish you every success in your endeavour to host the IFCO Conference here in British Columbia. If you are successful, the conference will be of benefit to many in this province who are committed to improving the lives of children and youth in foster care.”

This hard working committee is comprised of representatives from foster support agencies and community partners from throughout British Columbia, and we are extremely optimistic that the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development will be actively involved and partner with us in this project.

Current Participants include:

- Foster Parents Support Services Society
- Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services
- Canadian Foster Family Association
- Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents
- BC Federation of Foster Parent Associations
- AXIS Family Resources Ltd.
- Interior Community Services
- Okanagan Foster Parents Association
- Pacific Community Resources Society
- Federation of BC Youth in Care Network
- Child and Family Counselling Association
- Native Friendship Centre



Anyone interested in volunteering / participating / contributing is invited to contact Margaret Howley at mhowley@fpss.com.

What is IFCO?

“The International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO) is the only international network dedicated to the promotion and support of family foster care all over the world.”

IFCO Mission Statement:

IFCO promotes family-based solutions for out-of home children based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by:

- Enabling the exchange of information among persons and organizations of different nations
- Promoting Foster Care as an important type of family-based care
- Organizing International Conferences and Training Seminars
- Consultation
- Networking
- Publications
- Assistance

IFCO website: www.ifco.info/