

FOR RELEASE #09-199
August 31, 2009

Yukon Foster Parents to Receive Rate Increase

WHITEHORSE – Beginning October 1, Yukon’s foster parents will see the rates they receive increase by 17 per cent for the first time in 12 years, Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart announced today.

“Yukon foster parents are an integral part of our child welfare system, providing an essential service for children in care. We recognize the dedication, time and energy it takes to be a foster parent,” Hart said.

The minister said the cost of living and the costs associated with fostering children have increased substantially since 1997. “I am pleased that we are now able to provide an increase for foster parents that reflects the current situation,” he added.

In addition to the 17 per cent rate increase, foster care rates will also be indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) beginning in 2010. Basic foster care rates are provided directly to foster parents who volunteer to provide a home for children. The payments help pay for basic needs of children, including shelter, food, clothing, incidentals and some recreational costs.

“The Yukon Foster Parents Association welcomes the news that the Yukon government will provide a substantial increase in the base rates of child in care payments,” Tiana Zakus, president of the association said. “Being a foster parent has many challenges but stretching our family budgets to meet the needs of children in care of the director should not be one of them.”

Zakus said the association has recommended in the past linking rates to the CPI. “We are very happy with this announcement. It makes us feel valued and that we won’t be forgotten,” she added.

Basic foster care rates vary depending on the location of the community where the foster family lives. As of October 1, the basic rate in Whitehorse will be \$31.55 per day.

“This government promised to review foster care rates and we are now delivering on that promise,” Hart said. “We value the contribution made by volunteer foster parents and are pleased to ensure that they will have adequate funds to pay for the basic needs of children in their care.”

For more information about foster care in Yukon, visit www.hss.gov.yk.ca/foster_care.

-30-

Contact:

Roxanne Vallevand
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7949
roxanne.vallevand@gov.yk.ca

Michelle Boleen
Communications, Health & Social Services
867-456-6145
michelle.boleen@gov.yk.ca