



For Immediate Release

INVESTING IN CHILDCARE, INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE



Altona, MB. September 15, 2022:

The Town of Altona has committed \$1,000,000 towards the Kiddie Sunshine Centre's new childcare building project.



Childcare is critical for a strong community. In 2017, the Town of Altona commissioned a childcare study after the local licensed centre (Kiddie Sunshine Centre Inc) and local business leaders identified a shortage of childcare impacting the community and a cause for concern for employee recruitment and retention. That study showed that Altona and the Rhineland area are considerably underserved.

Canadian experts recommend that at least 50% of all children in Canada should have access to full-time childcare. The study showed that in Manitoba, 17.6% of children under 12 have access to

childcare, but only 4.2% children in our community have that access.

This shortage of access means that companies have a decreased ability to attract and retain employees and that parents, disproportionately women, are delayed from re-entering the workforce after welcoming a child to their family.

Since the results of that 2017 study, the Kiddie Sunshine Centre has been spearheading the expansion of access to care under their license to meet the community and economic needs of local families and businesses. The bold plan will almost double access to early childhood education spaces that their organization can serve. They have made significant advances on their new build project including, securing real estate for the build site, merging with Rhineland Child Care, and engaging with local business and community stakeholders to secure funding.

Kiddie Sunshine Centre has invested substantial time, energy, and legwork into securing funding and planning for this project. Board Chair Laura Wiebe is one of the passionate volunteers working to see this a reality. "Since fundraising began in 2020, the Kiddie Sunshine Centre has received tremendous support from the community and local businesses on this project" says Laura. "These efforts have allowed the centre to proceed with hiring a project manager and architect to coordinate the build and finalize drawings, but we need your continued support!"

In order to proceed, funding must be secured for the hard costs of the building, to be able to tender the build project and receive government approval. This is why the Town of Altona is announcing their commitment to provide one million dollars to the project, which will cost upwards of \$6.5 million.

"Town of Altona is in support of Kiddie Sunshine Centre and Altona's business leaders on the value of accessible, quality, and safe childcare, and it's role in growing our town," said Mayor Al Friesen. "It's an ambitious, and important initiative for Altona, that we feel will be financially supported by our community and business leaders."

Please direct inquiries to:

Sarah Cail
Communications and Human Resources Officer
Town of Altona
PO Box 1630
Altona, MB
R0G 0B0

Phone: (204) 324-6468