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Ministry of Children and Family Development

PARENTING VIDEO, WORKSHOPS SUPPORT NEW BRITISH COLUMBIANS

VANCOUVER - Positive Parenting Across Cultures, a new video project aimed at supporting and strengthening B.C.'s immigrant and refugee families, was unveiled today at S.U.C.C.E.S.S. multicultural agency in downtown Vancouver.

The video tells the fictionalized story of a Chinese immigrant parent and the challenges she - and her teen-aged daughter and son - face in navigating both a new culture and new societal rules. It also outlines the many programs and services available through the Ministry of Children and Family Development, including those that support children and youth with special needs and those with mental-health challenges, and their families. The ministry also has responsibility for youth justice, early childhood development, youth services and child care.

"This project speaks to a real need within the immigrant community for clear, culturally appropriate information about child protection, as well as the much broader role of the ministry in supporting children, youth and families," said Children and Family Development Minister Mary

Polak. "Our hope is that it will help 'demystify' the ministry and increase awareness of the wide range of programs and services offered to support vulnerable children and youth, and strengthen families."

Presently available in Mandarin with English subtitles, plus Cantonese, Korean and Vietnamese dubs with English subtitles, the video is part of

a larger community outreach project intended to educate and raise awareness about the nature of child protection as well as the much broader role of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Produced in partnership with the Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby School Districts - with funding from WelcomeBC - as well as community partners

S.U.C.C.E.S.S., MOSAIC and the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, the videos will be used to support Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)

presentations and outreach to immigrant and refugee families.

"The SWIS worker program has been tremendously successful in reaching out to newly arrived families and connecting them with services and resources in their schools and their communities," said Ida Chong, Regional Economic and Skills Development minister and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration. "This new video really adds to existing information about B.C.'s child welfare and family support system, and - most importantly - presents it in a way that families can both understand and relate to."

Lower Mainland SWIS workers connected with more than 28,000 clients in 2008-09.

"The SWIS and multicultural liaison workers in Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey school districts already do a tremendous job connecting with, and helping, new immigrant families adjust to life in a new cultural environment," said Valerie Overgaard, Vancouver school board associate superintendent-learning services. "These videos are a valuable new tool to help immigrant parents learn positive parenting skills as well as the roles and responsibilities of MCFD."

The Positive Parenting video also illustrates the widening communication gap some parents feel as their children are more quickly integrated into society.

"Many parents come to British Columbia for their children - so that they, the next generation, can get a good education and have the opportunity for a brighter future," said S.U.C.C.E.S.S. CEO Thomas Tam.

"But when children integrate more quickly, as children often do, that can lead to a widening communication gap, both in language and culture."

"That's why projects like this video - which provides culturally sensitive information about B.C. parenting practices plus a whole range of ministry services - are so important in getting families off to a good start," Tam said.

Expansion of the project, which also includes an accompanying trainer handbook, is slated to take place over the coming year with culturally appropriate materials being created for outreach to B.C.'s growing South Asian community. Future translations include Punjabi, Hindi and Farsi.

To view the video in its entirety, please visit:

http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/positive_parenting.htm

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