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Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education 2010



GUIDELINES AND NOMINATION FORM

Canada

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GUIDELINES
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The early years of children's lives are critical. The educators who teach and nurture young children have an impact that will last for the rest of their lives.

For most children, at least one educator will stand out as someone who encouraged, enabled and inspired them to be their very best when they were very young. The Prime Minister's Awards (PMA) for Excellence in Early Childhood Education (ECE) honour outstanding and innovative early childhood educators who excel at fostering the early development and socialization of the children in their care, and at helping build the foundation children need to meet life's challenges.

Awards

- Up to 10 Certificates of Excellence (national level), each including a financial award of \$5,000.
- Up to 15 Certificates of Achievement (regional level), each including a financial award of \$1,000.

Certificates of Excellence are awarded to the 10 top-ranked nominees, with at least one award designated for each of the following regions: British Columbia; Prairies; the North (Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut); Ontario; Quebec; and Atlantic Canada. In addition, at least one Certificate of Excellence is awarded to the top-ranked Aboriginal early childhood educator.

Up to 15 of the next top ranked nominees each receive a Certificate of Achievement. Of these, at least one Certificate of Achievement is awarded to an Aboriginal early childhood educator.

Financial awards for the Certificates of Excellence are shared evenly between the recipient and the recipient's ECE setting (as identified on the nomination form) to be spent under the recipient's direction. If a winning educator changes ECE settings, financial awards (ECE setting portion) go to the ECE setting at which the recipient was working at the time of nomination. Financial awards for the Certificates of Achievement are sent directly to recipients.

Award funds may be used for professional development, equipment, resource materials or other tools to improve developmental programming and children's experiences related to the educator's work. For recipients of the Certificate of Excellence, a portion of the ECE setting's award funds (up to 50%) may be used to cover educator replacement costs while the recipient is attending the national awards ceremony traditionally held in Ottawa.

Recognition

All winning educators receive a certificate, a PMA pin and letter of congratulations from the Prime Minister.

Certificate of Excellence recipients may also be invited to participate in best practice sessions and attend a special event where the Prime Minister, or his representative, will formally announce the PMA recipients and present them with their award certificates. Costs for Certificate of Excellence recipients to attend the national award ceremony are covered by the Prime Minister's Awards program.

Certificate of Achievement winners are honoured at local events with children, supervisors, colleagues and local members of Parliament or local leaders attending, as appropriate.

Each recipient's early childhood education setting, when applicable, also receives a certificate, signed by the Prime Minister, recognizing its support and contribution to the educator's achievement.

Promotion

The achievements of all recipients are promoted both nationally and in the educators' home communities. Certificate of Excellence recipients are profiled (with their permission) in the Prime Minister's Awards *Exemplary Practices* publication, which can be viewed at: www.pma.gc.ca.

"To be told that I am outstanding at what I have chosen to do means the world to me! I feel proud and yet humbled at the same time: proud for the recognition and affirmation and humbled that I have been blessed to work in a field filled with children and families."

2009 Certificate of Excellence Recipient

Eligibility

Upon submission of the nomination no later than **November 30, 2010**, all nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Nominees must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents.
- Nominees must work a minimum of 2.5 days a week providing direct education and care to young children in a licensed early childhood education setting (as defined by provincial or territorial government regulations¹). Full-time centre administrators are not eligible for this award.
- Nominees must have successfully completed training in early childhood education and care as follows (copy of training certification must be provided with nomination):
 - degree, diploma or certificate in early childhood education and care;
 - official certification as an early childhood educator in the province or territory where the nominee is working; or,
 - successfully completed a training program in family child care.
- Nominees must have worked in a licensed Canadian early childhood education setting for at least three years and still be gainfully employed in an ECE setting at the time of the nomination deadline (November 30, 2010).

Note: If the license to operate is lost between the time of nomination and the award presentation, the Prime Minister's Awards program reserves the right to withdraw this candidacy. If eligibility status of a nomination is compromised or changes (e.g. due to loss of certification, the closure of a centre, or as

a result of professional misconduct), the nominator and/or nominee has a responsibility to inform the PMA program of a change in status in writing. See the PMA recipient Code of Conduct www.pma.gc.ca for further information.

Posthumous nominations are not accepted.

The Prime Minister's Awards are designed to honour the overall accomplishments of a single educator or a **team of up to three educators**. The program is not intended to recognize the achievements of an entire early childhood education setting or staff. Each member of a team must meet the eligibility requirements described above. Any cash award is to be shared equally among the team members.

Educators who are not eligible for this award may be eligible for the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence. Nomination guidelines are available at www.pma.gc.ca, by sending an email to pmate-ppmee@gc.ca, or by calling 613-946-0651.

¹ This requirement is waived for nominees who work in Aboriginal Head Start sites on and off reserve or in early childhood education settings on reserve where there is no applicable provincial or territorial government licensing.

Nominators

Nominators may be any person or group with direct knowledge of the nominee's contribution (e.g. parent of child in care, supervisor, fellow educator, etc.). However, self-nominations or nominations received from a nominee's direct family member will not be accepted.

Renomination

Recipients of a Certificate of Achievement may be re-nominated for a Certificate of Excellence in a subsequent year, but are ineligible for a second Achievement award. Unsuccessful nominees may be re-nominated in a subsequent year. In all cases, a complete and current nomination package must be submitted, including letters of support written during the current nomination period. Previous recipients of a Certificate of Excellence are not eligible.

How Recipients Are Chosen

A committee of early childhood education and care practitioners and stakeholders from across Canada reviews all nominations received for the Prime Minister's Awards. See the current list of organizations represented in the selection committee on our website at: www.pma.gc.ca.

Nomination packages are evaluated and ranked by selection committee members based on how well the nominee meets the selection criteria and a final list of top-ranked individuals is then recommended to the Prime Minister for recognition.

Nomination Deadline: November 30, 2010

Selection Criteria

Award recipients are selected based on their innovative approaches and outstanding ability to engage and support the development of the children in their care, and on their overall commitment to the development of children and the early childhood education and care profession. While an exemplary project or practice may form part of a nomination, nominees are judged on their overall merits as educators.

In selecting award recipients, the committee looks for **clear evidence** that nominees have excelled in **all four** areas described below.

1. Support of child development

The nomination text should describe and provide evidence of how the educator provides daily experiences that support and promote each child's physical, emotional, social, cognitive, ethical and creative development, such as the following:

- optimizing each child's unique development;
- encouraging children's interest and participation;
- providing stimulating and engaging learning environments for all children;
- developing and maintaining warm, caring and responsive relationships with each child and with the group of children;
- using observation to assess children's skills, abilities, interests and needs; and,
- using developmentally appropriate "best practices."

2. Innovation

The nomination text should describe and provide concrete examples of the educator's use of innovative and creative approaches to encourage and support child development, such as the following:

- capturing and maintaining children's interest;
- exploring new or different ideas with children;
- recognizing and adapting to children's special needs (including physical, emotional, social, cognitive and creative needs);
- recognizing and including diverse economic, cultural, linguistic and regional perspectives in the learning environment;
- respecting and promoting children's home language and cultural heritage;
- incorporating events and activities occurring in children's lives in the learning environment; and,
- incorporating international, national, local and community events and activities in the learning environment.

"It is a great personal honour to be included in the company of so many excellent professionals... This has given me a chance to talk about my work, to highlight the importance of supporting early childhood education."

2009 Certificate of Excellence Recipient

3. Involvement with parents, families and the community

The nomination text should describe and provide concrete examples of the educator's efforts to involve and engage parents, families and the community in children's education and care, such as the following:

- developing and maintaining open, cooperative relationships with each child's family;
- encouraging active parent, family and community involvement in children's learning;
- developing and using innovative approaches to engaging and supporting parents and families;
- fostering community contacts or partnerships that encourage or complement children's learning and activities; and,
- developing and maintaining relationships with others in the early childhood education setting, such as colleagues or with other community services involved with the children.

4. Commitment and leadership in the field

The nomination text should show evidence of the educator's ongoing professional development and commitment to improving the early childhood education and care field and to enhancing the ability of others in the profession, such as the following:

- engaging in ongoing personal professional growth and learning;
- organizing or delivering professional development courses, workshops or other development activities;
- developing and disseminating learning materials, resources and best practices;
- providing support or training to other professionals in the field (such as mentoring and training of students);
- fostering or contributing to the development of a team environment within their own early childhood education setting; and,
- being actively involved in a professional organization, network or association related to early childhood education and care.

How to Apply

Once you have identified one outstanding early childhood educator or a team of educators, develop a nomination package following the guidelines and checklist provided.

- Each nomination package must include a completed copy of the attached PMA nomination form. This form is also available online at: www.pma.gc.ca.
- Forms must be signed by the nominee and the nominator, as well as by the nominee's supervisor, when applicable.
- When there is more than one nominee, please copy and complete a separate form for each.
- When more than one nomination package is received for an educator, nominators will be asked to combine their packages.

Nomination Deadline

The deadline for nominations is **November 30, 2010** (nomination packages must be date stamped no later than November 30, 2010).

Assembling a Nomination Package

Length: Your complete nomination package must not exceed **20 pages**.

Format: All information should be typewritten in a font no smaller than 10 point and double-spaced on 8½" x 11" paper. To ensure ease of reproduction, please print on **one side only**.

Packaging: Creative packaging can certainly make a nomination package stand out. Unfortunately, the selection committee members do not get the opportunity to see it. Therefore, simple packaging is recommended.

Binding: For ease of reproduction, please **do not bind** your nomination package.

Copies: In addition to the original, please include **five copies** of the complete package.

Helpful Hints in Preparing A Nomination Text

An effective nomination package illustrates the outstanding achievements of the nominee and clearly explains why she or he should receive one of Canada's highest honours for early childhood educators. As a nominator, you are "painting a picture" of a nominee's achievements for a selection committee that reviews many applications, so the package should be compelling.

Follow the criteria set out in the nomination guidelines. Provide adequate detail for each of the four categories of selection criteria. You may wish to organize your text using the same headings.

Provide concrete examples and details to show how the nominee has met the selection criteria and explain the impact of the educator's efforts. Describe any special projects or activities, philosophies, unique learning environments, or child reactions, outcomes or achievements that make this educator stand out.

Focus on the nominee's overall achievements. Show that the nominee is well rounded in her or his overall work, not just in one particular project. Include activities the nominee participates in to support the development of the children in her or his care, the setting in which she or he works, colleagues and the early childhood education and care field (such as volunteer work, professional development, social events, etc.)

Refer to the checklist on page 10 to ensure you have included all necessary information.

Please send nomination packages to the following address:

Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence
in Early Childhood Education
Industry Canada
Jean Edmonds Tower North
300 Slater Street, 20th floor
Ottawa ON K1A 0C8

Fax: 613-998-0943

For more information, please send an e-mail to pmaece-ppmepe@gc.ca or call 613-946-0651.

Acknowledgements

Industry Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada as partners in the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education, gratefully acknowledge all of the stakeholders, experts, practitioners, and government officials, who provided advice on the development of this award. In addition, numerous organizations and individuals involved in early childhood education and care take part in the award selection process. The program could not function without the participation of these volunteers. A list of the participating organizations is available on the program website at: www.pma.gc.ca.

Checklist



To facilitate the preparation of the nomination package and its review by the PMA office, please attach this checklist to your nomination package.

- ☐ **Copy of this checklist fully completed** (one page)
- ☐ **Signed nomination form** (two pages)
- ☐ **Copy of ECE setting's operating licence** as defined by provincial or territorial government regulations; if applicable (one page)
- ☐ **Evidence of nominee's training in early childhood education and care** such as a copy of a degree, diploma or certificate showing completion of training (one page)
- ☐ **Evidence of nominee's experience** employer confirmation letter indicating a minimum of three years in a licensed early childhood setting (one page)
- ☐ **Nomination text** (two per criteria, maximum eight pages)
- ☐ **Letters of support** (three required) Letters should **not exceed two pages each** and must be signed by the author. Letters of support should provide evidence of the nominee's excellence and achievements under any or all of the four selection criteria. The selection committee looks at the picture painted in both the nomination text and the letters of support. To reduce repetition, ask writers to focus on one or two specific things about the educator that make her or him exceptional. Letters may come from anyone with direct knowledge of the nominee's accomplishments; however, letters from parents, children, peers and professional associations are often particularly effective in demonstrating a nominee's impact. Letters of support must be **issued no earlier than six months prior** to the nomination deadline, and must include contact information (mailing address and telephone number) for the author.

Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education

2010 Nomination Form

Please type or write in BLOCK letters. Please provide a separate form for each nominee.

Nominee's Personal Information

☐ Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

(Please provide names as they should appear on certificates)

Home Address _____

City/Community _____ Prov./Terr. _____ Postal Code _____

Tel. (H) (_____) _____ E-mail (H) _____

Tel. (W) (_____) _____ E-mail (W) _____

For the purposes of the awards designated for Aboriginal early childhood educators, do you self-identify as Aboriginal? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Personal Information

All personal information collected in nominations is protected under the *Privacy Act*. It is used by Industry Canada to process the nominations and for related statistical studies. Participation is voluntary. Information will be stored in Personal Information Bank IST-P-PU-015. Nominees may access, request correction of, or have a notation attached to the information about them at the address on page 10.

Each award recipient's name, early childhood education setting, community, and work contact information are included in short biographies published for the media and online at www.pma.gc.ca. Award recipients' photographs may also be used in promotional and information materials by the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

Nominator

To be completed by either an individual nominator or a representative of a nominating group.

☐ Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization represented (when applicable) _____

Address _____

City/Community _____ Prov./Terr. _____ Postal Code _____

Tel. (H) (_____) _____ Tel. (W) (_____) _____

E-mail _____ Fax (_____) _____

Supervisor (if applicable)

☐ Dr. ☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Nominee's ECE Setting Information

Name of setting _____

Address _____

City/Community _____ Prov./Terr. _____ Postal Code _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail address (when applicable) _____

Website _____

Type of setting (e.g. child care centre, Aboriginal Head Start program, family child care program) _____

Ages of children in nominee's care _____

Signatures

Nominator

Signature of Nominator _____ Date _____

Nominee

I, the nominee, affirm that all information contained in this nomination package is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and correct. I affirm that my license to operate, if applicable and certificate/diploma in Early Childhood Education and/or ECE credential is valid and in good standing. By signing this form, I authorize the Prime Minister's Awards office to conduct a verification of the information provided in this nomination. I also understand that award-winning ideas and methods will be published in an on-line exemplary practices publication and I give my release for that purpose. I have also read the Prime Minister's Awards recipient Code of Conduct found on the program website at www.pma.gc.ca.

Signature of Nominee _____ Date _____

Supervisor/Guarantor (should a supervisor not be applicable, endorsement of a "guarantor" is requested, e.g. pastor, lawyer, community leader, MLA, etc. who has known you personally for at least two years.)

Signature of Supervisor _____ Date _____
(or guarantor)

**For more information or assistance in completing your nomination,
call our offices at 613-946-0651, or send us an e-mail (pmaece-ppmepe@gc.ca).**

FOR PMA OFFICE USE ONLY		
Is the nominee a Canadian citizen?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is evidence of the nominee's training in early childhood education and care included in the nomination package?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is evidence that the early childhood setting in which the nominee works is licensed included in the nomination package?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the nominee have at least three years experience in a licensed early childhood setting?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the nomination text included in the nomination package?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the three letters of support included in the nomination package?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the nominee meet all criteria to be eligible for a PMA?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

