

Troubadour

Saskatchewan Foster Families Association

Back to School! Preparing for a New School Year

Children spend one-half of their waking hours in school or school-related activities. Studies show that children whose parents are involved in their education do better in school than children whose parents are not involved.

The following pointers can be helpful in promoting good attitudes and practices in your child.

- Establish effective communication with your child's school

- Start communication when things are going well with your child. Give compliments to the teacher through notes or phone conversations.

- When there are problems, share concerns while they are small. Ask how things are going.

- When attending

school activities, prepare yourself with questions or concerns that you want to address.

- Join the PTA, or volunteer your time in order to



share more of your child's world.

- Be available to encourage your child.

Show your child you are interested by being consistently available at predictable times each day. Do not attempt to protect your child from negative consequences by doing the homework assignment yourself (or by

"helping" too much). This will seriously detract from your child's confidence to cope successfully with future school demands.

- Display a love of learning at home.

To fuel your child's natural interest and curiosity, celebrate learning. Ask questions, exchange ideas and allow your child to arrive at his or her own conclusions. Provide a home environment rich in books, games and projects. Above all, let your child see you enjoying new challenges and activities.

Information provided by parenting.org and girlsandboystown.org

Volume 2, Issue 3

Fall 2007



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2007-2008 Membership Cards

If you have not received your SFFA 2007-2008 Membership for 2007-2008

please contact the office Administrator

Toll Free: 1-888-276-2880

Message from our New President

I am pleased to have been selected as President of the SFFA Board at this year's PAGM in June. The year ahead will certainly present many challenges, and it is reassuring to have a stable and experienced Board.

The past year has been very busy, and I want to thank the staff and the Executive Director for the excellent job they have done. Many of them have taken on an extra load with seeing an increase of requests for support to our members, and it is

immensely appreciated. I am pleased on behalf of the Board of Directors to welcome Jolyn Sloan, Angela Kurysh and Regan Gee, they all bring a wealth of experience and knowledge and will be a valuable addition to the SFFA team.

To our families my deepest gratitude...for the commitment and care that you as foster parents provide to the children and youth of our province. I look forward to the rewarding work that our association continues to do on behalf of our members.



Tracie Gilchrist

Meet our Staff!

There has been a lot of changes in the SFFA office. We are excited to introduce to you three new people who work to provide support to Saskatchewan foster parents. Read on to learn more about them and what they do to support you as foster parents.

Angela Kurysh:

Office Administrator

I have just finished my Business Administration at Saskatoon Business College. I will most likely be the first person you will have contact with at the SFFA. I do most of the admin, answering phones and a lot of behind the scenes work. I make sure that you talk to the right people and get the help you need from our staff. I look forward to speaking to you in the future.

Jolyn Sloan: Intake, Research & Communications Coordinator

Before working at SFFA I had been teaching High School and have just

completed my Masters in Theology. I am excited to work for the SFFA; working with foster families who need information and support in fostering. I am also overseeing the Newsletter, Website, Training and Communications. Feel free to call or stop by any time if you have any questions or concerns at (306) 975-1585.

Regan Gee: Family Support Coordinator

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the most recent addition to the SFFA team. Accepting the position of Family Support Coordinator, I bring with me the completion of a Bachelor of Social Work as well as several years of professional experience in the human services field. As a Family Support Coordinator, I am here to support you as foster parents not only in times of high stress and crisis, but I am also here for any general questions or concerns you may have throughout the year. Feel free to give me a call, introduce

yourself, and let me know what is on your mind. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jan Clark: Family Support Coordinator

Greetings to all. I hope everyone had a wonderful summer!

Working for the SFFA and foster parents for the past year and a half has been a great experience. Those of you who I have met have taught me much about the foster care system and what it truly means to be a foster parent.

For those that I have not had the opportunity to meet, my door is always open!

In June of this year I was given the opportunity to conduct some training for our volunteers and I must say I had a great time. Everyone's participation was in full force and I truly appreciated all feedback, comments and concerns.

As some of you know, I took the Primary Care Paramedic course at SIAST and feel very strongly that all foster parents should receive first aid

and CPR training. With that, we are still offering training (paid by the Association) in conjunction with St. John Ambulance and I encourage each of you to contact your local president should you wish to participate.

I look forward to continuing to work with Foster Parents and Department staff and invite each one of you to contact me should you have any concerns, interest in training or just to have a chat! I will say my farewell and leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

Let us put our minds together
And see
What kind of life
We can make for our children
- Chief Sitting Bull -

Deb Davies: Executive Director

Where does time go? Summer is here and gone...the Provincial Office staff has been extremely busy over the past number of months supporting foster families. We have seen an increase of foster home investigation over the past several months, the number of inquiries and requests for support has also augmented.

The Provincial office continues to work on behalf of our membership on several different projects, some of which are:

- Damage Compensation Procedures and Policy
- Legal Assistance for Foster Families
 - Health & Dental Plan for families
 - Membership discounts
 - Policy changes (Children's Service Manual)
- Conflict Resolutions Process and Policy
- Informational packages for the Members of the Legislative Assembly
- Planning for the 2007 Foster Families Events
- 2008 Provincial Conference
- 2010 Provincial / National Conference



Regan Gee, Deb Davies, Jolyn Sloan, Jan Clark, Angela Kurysh

The beginning of June Minister Kevin Yates took on the portfolio of Community Resources, with Minister Buckley Belanger moving to the portfolio of Highways and Transportation. Over the past few months, the association has had the opportunity to meet with Minister Yates to express to him the priorities of the membership. Minister Yates has assured the association and individual foster families that he has met with that he plans to make many changes to better support foster families and the children they care for.

There have been a few changes in the SFFA Provincial Office during the past few months. Shirley Larocque is on leave of absence doing work with the Ranch Ehrlo Society, and Larry Evans has been away on leave.

Angela Kurysh has taken the position of Office Administrator. Angela just graduated in June

from Saskatoon Business College with honours.

Jolyn Sloan, has joined the office and has taken on the position of Intake, Research and Communications Coordinator. Jolyn has been soliciting company's for discounts for the membership and has been very successful in bringing on board company's such as The Brick, Saskatoon Travelodge to name a few.

Regan Gee, has joined the team in a six-month term position. Regan has taken on the position of Family Support Coordinator. In June, Regan graduated from the University of Regina with a Bachelor of Social Work.

In closing, I wish everyone a long and warm fall...and hope to see many of you during the celebrations of Foster Families Week (October 15-21, 2007).

TRIPOLGY: A Great Way To Support the SFFA

We have a new revolutionary way of fundraising. Every time you book your travel through Tripology a portion of the profits will benefit Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. If you have any questions or need help with this program contact Dianne at (403) 605-1877 or email:

Dianne_epp@hotmail.com or
info@tripologytravelink.com



Flying anytime soon? Be sure to check out Tripologytravelink.com and support your local SFFA

MOVING? Please contact the SFFA Toll Free: 1-888-276-2880 to continue receiving important updates and info!

Special Needs Education Costs



Under the *Education Act*, the local Board of Education has the responsibility of providing education services to, among others, children who reside in the school division. This includes children in care.

Initial Supplies and Fees:

- Foster parents will receive the initial costs of books, supplies and equipment prior to the start of the school year. The actual costs will be recommended to regional

offices by the local school board or division. For youth in high school, fees may be required prior to the start of the semester.

Other Covered School Costs:

- School costs incurred other than at the time of enrollment, e.g. when a child comes into care in mid year, will be provided.
- Tuition may be paid to attend a private school only if this will meet an identified need which cannot be met in the regular school system or if this is part of an ongoing plan.
- Payment may be made for individual tutoring due to environmental or personal factors or therapeutic training, when a child in care is experiencing failure in this school setting and will benefit from a therapeutic tutoring project (only if not covered under the *Education Act*)

- Extra services such as psychological training, speech therapy and other professional services are often available through the Health District or the Department of Education. When a child in care is unable to enter the regular school program, training-on-the-job situations may be considered. Funds may be available through Post Secondary Education

School Pictures:

- The actual cost of an average package of pictures will be issued to the foster parents. This may be paid in advance or reimbursed after the purchase.

For further information see: *Section 7.5 of the Children's Services Policies and Procedures Manual.*

Leaf Crafts: Fall Fun for the Whole Family

Looking for something to do with all those leaves piling up in your yard?

- Create a colourful centrepiece for Thanksgiving. You can collect leaves still on the branch to fill a vase or collect fallen leaves and fill a clear glass bowl.

- When making a hand-outlined turkey (a craft involving making a turkey out of the shape of your hand) you can use colourful leaves for the tail feathers instead of feathers. You can also use pressed leaves on homemade dream catchers (press them so they last longer and keep their colourfulness instead of turning brown)

- Rake up your leaves and get a head start on Halloween decorations by stuffing a scarecrow with them.

- Make a leaf wreath for Thanksgiving, or just for fall.

Glue the leaves onto a circle of cardboard for the frame.

- Press the leaves and make them into cards for next year. Homemade cards are a lot more special than bought cards and can be enjoyed for years to come.

- Grab a green leaf before it changes colour, trace its outline on a piece of paper (or construction paper) and colour it different colours.

“Make a leaf wreath with your children for fall and add color to your home.”

Try to imagine what colour the tree will be, and check back later to see how close you were. If the

colours have already changed, trace the coloured leaf and try to colour it exactly like the leaf!

- Put leaves between layers of waxed paper, put a dishtowel underneath and on top, and run a hot iron over it for a minute or two. The wax will transfer to the leaves and they'll stay shiny and colorful for quite a while.

- You can print a fall/autumn border on to A4 paper and then stick a variety of leaves in the middle then laminate the sheet. Would make a nice tablemat

- Make a mask with the kids! Collect different colour leaves. Once dry, glue them to a plain mask to make a really cool Fall mask. You might even use for Halloween.

Information provided by: <http://www.kidsturncentral.com/crafts/eafcrafts.htm>



Leaves piling up in your yard? Have fun with them.



We Want to Hear Your Stories

Do you have a story you would like to share about being a foster parent? Something that would encourage and support other foster parents? If so, then we want to hear from you!

Submission Guidelines:

Maximum Length for all unsolicited articles is 800 words, though shorter articles are welcomed. All submissions are subject to editing for both clarity and length.

How to Submit: Please email

jolyns.sffa@sasktel.net with stories, articles, poems or call Toll Free 1-888-276-2880 if you would like help putting it on paper or if you have any questions or events that you would like to share with other foster parents. Submission in Word format are preferred. All submissions must include author's name and phone number. No guarantees are made that a submission will be printed.

Did You Know? Health Risks Associated with Exposure to Second-Hand Smoke

Breathing in second-hand smoke causes at least 800 deaths in Canadian non-smokers from lung cancer and heart disease every year. The best way to protect your family from the health effects of second-hand smoke is to make your home and car 100% smoke-free.

Second-hand smoke is what smokers exhale and what rises from an idle burning cigarette, cigar or pipe. When you see second-hand smoke in the air, what may not be so obvious is that there are 4,000 chemicals in the smoke.

More than 50 of these chemicals are carcinogens. This means they cause cancer. The chemicals also contribute directly to other diseases, such as asthma, heart disease and emphysema.

When someone smokes in your home, second-hand smoke spreads from one room to another, even if the door to the smoking area is closed. In addition, potentially toxic chemicals in second-hand smoke can cling to rugs, curtains, clothes, food and other materials, and can usually remain in a room or car long after someone has smoked there.



You may think you can clear the smoke from a room or your car by opening a window or turning on a fan, but this is not the case. Studies have shown there is no level of ventilation that will eliminate the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. Even air filters (air purifiers) are not enough. Second-hand smoke is composed of both particles and gases. Most air filters are designed to remove fine smoke particles from the air, but they do not remove the gases that can cause diseases.

Second-hand smoke hurts everyone, but is particularly dangerous to babies and children because their lungs are still developing. Because their lungs are smaller, babies and children breathe more quickly and take in more harmful chemicals for their size than adults do. In addition, their immune systems are less developed and cannot protect them as much from tobacco smoke.



Second-hand smoke can cause serious health problems for children

The health effects from exposure to second-hand smoke include the following:

- Babies who breathe in second-hand smoke have a higher risk of dying from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) or crib death.
- Babies and children exposed to second-hand smoke have more frequent lower respiratory tract problems, such as coughs, pneumonia, bronchitis and croup.
- Children exposed to second-hand smoke are more likely to develop asthma. They will also suffer more from it than asthmatic children of non-smokers.
- Second-hand smoke increases the number of ear infections in children.
- Second-hand smoke may also harm a child's ability to think things through (cognition). Recently, studies have shown that children exposed to tobacco smoke scored lower on tests than children who were not exposed.

For more information on the health risks of second-hand smoke, please visit :

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/tobac-tabac/index_e.html

What's in a Name?

There have been so many changes going on in our office, that we decided to change the name of our newsletter! The SFFA are holding a contest for any foster parent and/or child who would like to submit a new catchy name for our newsletter.



Your Chance to Win!

If the SFFA chooses your name, you will receive a prize! 2nd and 3rd place runner-ups will also receive a prize. Contact the SFFA and submit your idea's today!

Contact Jolyn at jolyns.sffa@sasktel.net or call (306) 975-1585.

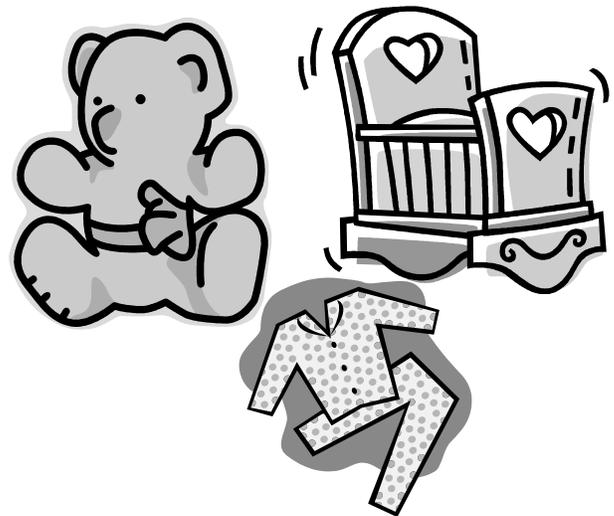
Call or email your idea today for your chance to win!

Did You Know?

Did you know that Foster Care Share has been changed to Foster Care Trading Post? Do you have used articles that you no longer need, such as children's clothing and/or toys, furniture, or appliances? Have you taken on new foster children and are in dire need of toys, a bed, clothing, or other household or personal items?

The Foster Care Trading Post has been developed to assist in providing foster parents with FREE good condition used articles they will find useful in caring for children.

Foster Care Trading Post



Sign up by visiting:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/reginafostercaretradingpost/>
for Regina

or

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/saskatoonfostercaretradingpost/>
for Saskatoon

Visit our Website for more information: www.sffa.sk.ca or call (306) 975-1580



Department News: Increases to Foster Care Rates

The Department is pleased to announce increases to the basic maintenance rates, skill development fee, babysitting and respite rates, effective September 1, 2007.

The following chart shows the new basic maintenance rates: (Please note that the rates for the two age categories, 0 – 1 year and 1 – 5 years is now combined into one payment amount for children aged 0 – 5 years.)

SOUTHERN FOSTER CARE RATES (effective September 1, 2007)

Age	Food	Clothing	Education	Personal Care	Transportation	Household Operations	Recreation	Total
0 - 5	180.53	113.64	7.44	10.26	75.93	145.48	39.72	573.00
6 - 11	201.58	86.27	14.81	13.86	75.93	145.48	65.07	603.00
12 -15	234.27	94.99	14.81	33.86	75.93	145.48	80.66	680.00
16	260.32	131.65	14.81	43.65	75.93	145.48	95.16	767.00

NORTHERN FOSTER CARE RATES (effective September 1, 2007)

Age	Food	Clothing	Education	Personal Care	Transportation	Household Operations	Recreation	Total
0 - 5	196.46	115.82	9.10	15.70	81.75	149.45	39.72	608.00
6 - 11	252.82	92.25	17.77	19.89	81.75	149.45	65.07	679.00
12 -15	297.10	97.32	17.77	41.95	81.75	149.45	80.66	766.00
16	342.32	136.94	17.77	54.61	81.75	149.45	95.16	878.00

Recommended spending allowance:

Age 6-11, \$20.00/mo.; age 12-15, \$40.00/mo.; age 16+, \$48.00/mo. North and South. (To be given to the child from the food, personal, and recreation rate.)

Increases to the skill development fee are as follows:

- Practitioner Foster Families will receive a Skill Development Fee of \$125/month/child
- Foster families who are receiving a Fee for Service will also receive the Skill Development Fee payment of \$125.00

Babysitting and respite rate increases are as follows:

- The hourly rate will increase to \$4.00/hour for one child and \$2.00/hour for each additional child to a maximum of \$8.00/hour.
- The daily rate will change to \$30.00/day for one child and \$15.00/day for each additional child to a maximum of \$96.00/day.
- Respite days will increase from 5 days to 10 days/year.
- Respite rates will increase to \$30.00/day for one child and \$15.00/day for each additional child.

P.R.I.D.E (Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education)



PRIDE implementation is well underway in Saskatchewan, as all new foster parents are now being trained using PRIDE PreService.

All approved Practitioner foster families will be required to attend an "Introduction to PRIDE" training session which will prepare them for the PRIDE model of practice.

What is PRIDE?

PRIDE is a competency based approach, which builds the following competencies:

- Protecting and nurturing children
- Meeting children's developmental needs and addressing developmental delays

- Supporting relationships between children and their families
- Connecting children to safe, nurturing relationships intended to last a lifetime; and
- Working as a member of a professional team

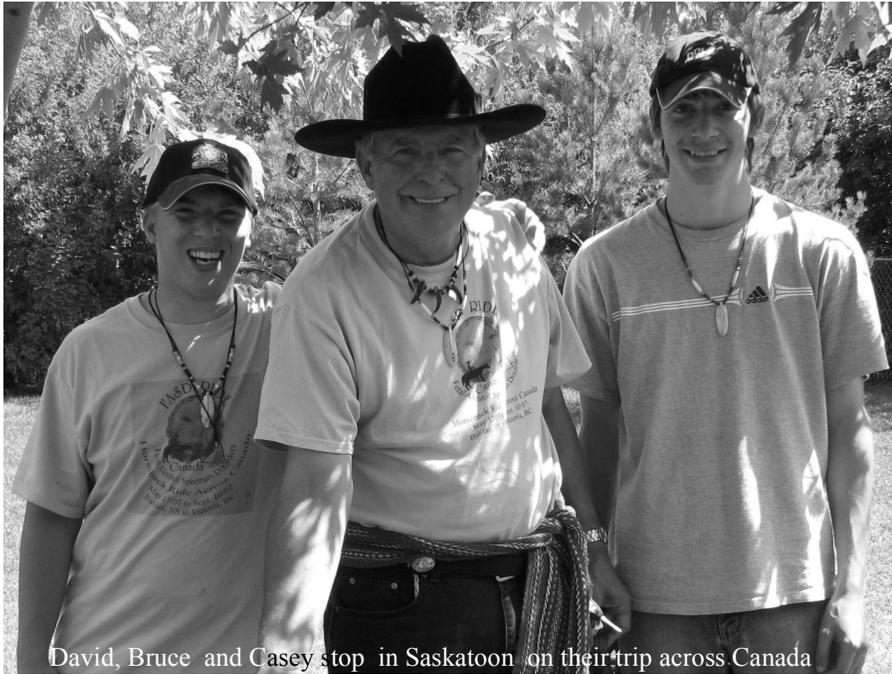
Pride has identified "Pre-service", "Core", "Advanced", and "Specialized" competencies for foster families. "Core" Train the Trainers training for staff and foster parent trainers will begin in January, 2008.

Benefits of PRIDE Implementation:

- Caregivers will attain skills that will better meet the needs of children in care.
- Foster families will better understand and support family reunification.
- Caregivers will feel supported and this will improve foster care recruitment and retention.
- Caseworkers and caregivers will work as a professional team.
- Partnerships with First Nations agencies will be strengthened.

Raising Awareness on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder

Bruce Ritchie, his son David, David's friend Casey and their dog Duchess set out on an adventure across Canada to spread awareness on FASD. They arrived in Saskatoon with a warm welcome from various supporters in the community. The Honorable Graham Addley was first to address the need for education in this area. He



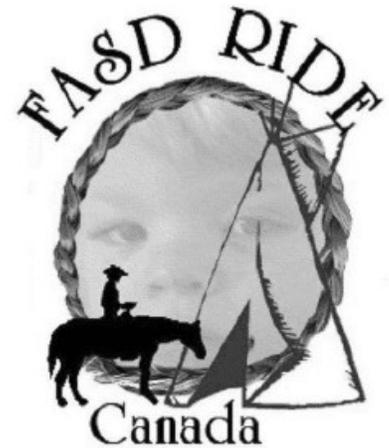
David, Bruce and Casey stop in Saskatoon on their trip across Canada

has been appointed the Legislative Secretary to the Premier on Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment. He explained that advances are coming forward in this area and that there has been an extra 4 million dollars to be used in health education.

Evelyn Johnston, from the Central Urban Métis Federation (CUMFI) was there to present an aboriginal sash to Bruce Ritchie for his dedication to this topic.

Chief Weighill described that the Saskatoon Police Service wants to take away opportunities for crime, work with partners on improving social conditions, and increase the safe quality of life Saskatoon enjoys.

Angela Schmolke, the executive director of The FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan Inc., a parent-led organization for individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and their families,



expressed her thanks towards Bruce, David and Casey for promoting more awareness.

Marlene Day and Teddy Smokeyday explained the FASD Supported Housing Project. Day explained, "The conclusions of our project were that, with personal support and advocacy, persons with FASD are able to live successfully in a variety of housing situations. Support and increased knowledge on the part of service providers are fundamental to stabilizing lives and creating positive outcomes for persons with FASD."

The afternoon ended with Bruce Ritchie sharing stories from his own experience raising his son David with FASD, their journey across Canada and some statistics on FASD. He portrayed that, 37% of babies have been exposed to multiple episodes of binge drinking (5+ drinks per session) during pregnancy. An additional 42% have been multiply exposed to 1 to 4 drinks per session during pregnancy.

Prenatal alcohol exposure has been linked to more than 60 disease conditions, birth defects and disabilities.

Damage is a diverse continuum from mild intellectual and behavioural issues to profound disabilities or premature death. Prenatal alcohol damage varies due to volume ingested, timing during pregnancy, peak blood alcohol levels, genetics and environmental factors. It is probable that about

are significantly by prenatal alcohol require special become adults, disappear but the

“ 37% of babies have been exposed to multiple episodes of binge drinking (5+ drinks per session).”

15% of children enough affected exposure to education. As they FASD does not issues of youth

translate into ongoing problems in family relationships, employment, mental health and justice conflicts. The cost to the individuals affected, their families and society are enormous and as a society, we cannot afford to ignore them.

The afternoon revealed the ongoing support for more education on FASD and the need for the community to work together. Thanks for travelling across Canada to bring more awareness!

For more information on FASD visit faslink.org



Bruce Ritchie traveling across Canada for FASD

Board of Directors

President
Tracie Gilchrist
Bethune
683-4444

traciegilchrist@sasktel.net

Kevin Harris
White City
922-1863
r.quesnel@shaw.ca

Robert Quesnel
Prince Albert
789-2956
kevinharris@sasktel.net

Carolyn Scheinous
Cudworth
256-7081
cscheinous@hotmail.com

Greg Yewchuck
Birtch Hills
749-2866
chucky_1966@hotmail.com

Farhad Nikbakht
Sedley
885-2266
f.nikbakht@sasktel.net

Stephan Clark
Parkside
747-3320
auzzie.clark@sasktel.net





**Saskatchewan Foster Families Association
Support Staff**

*Saskatchewan Foster
Family Association Inc.*

Executive Director

Deb Davies
(306) 975-1580

231 4th Ave South
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7K 1N1

Office Administrator
Angela Kurysh

Family Support Coordinator
Jan Clark

Phone: (306)975-1580
Fax: (306) 975-1581
Toll Free: 1-888-276-2880
E-mail: sffa@saskel.sk.ca
Website: www.sffa.sk.ca

**Intake, Communications
& Training Coordinator**
Jolyn Sloan

Family Support Coordinator
Regan Gee

**We're on the web!
Check us out at
www.sffa.sk.ca**



**If you want your
newsletter sent by
email, send us your
email address.**

jolyns.sffa@sasktel.net

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