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EXCERPTS

Childcare Resource and Referral offices across the province, including one in Duncan, remain open, but have taken a cut in staff to accommodate big funding cutbacks from the provincial government.

"We're all still here," said Delta McDonell, program coordinator for the Cowichan Valley Childcare Resource and Referral program and regional coordinator for Vancouver Island. "We're all still struggling with our cutbacks but we're all still here."

Early this year the province announced a 50 per cent cut in funding to the Resource and Referral programs to begin in April, with a further cut to come in September that would have seen the annual budget for the program reduced from $14 million a year to just $3 million.

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After public outcry against the deep cuts, the province announced reinstatement of some of the funding for the Resource and Referral program, setting the annual budget at $9 million.

This still represents a 33 per cent funding cut for the program. To keep offices open, some tough cutbacks have been made.

While it isn't perfect, McDonell said, they're happy to still have their doors open.

Resource and Referral centres direct parents to childcare, do research in the field and provide inspections for some facilities to ensure maintenance of standards.

- reprinted from the Cowichan Valley Citizen

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