



Monica Ekman (left) and Lucie Honey-Ray sell Bote Medsons some raffle tickets and promote Their Success By 6 and early childhood education message at a Chamber Luncheon recently. — TINA LITTLE/STAFF PHOTO

## Supporting early success

An upcoming raffle promises to make someone in the eastern Fraser Valley the proud owner of a 2006 Pontiac Wave and give residents of Abbotsford a chance to support local early childhood initiatives. The raffle, sponsored by Success by 6, a community-based movement that improves the lives of young children and their families, is unique in that it enables \$6 to be raised for every \$5 ticket sold. Second prize is a \$3,000 vacation package and third prize is \$3000 cash.

"Early childhood programs in Abbotsford will directly benefit from every ticket sold locally," says Lucie Honey-Ray, project co-ordinator of the Abbotsford Early Childhood Committee. "Every penny stays in Abbotsford. Success by 6 has already contributed over \$38,000 to several local projects, such as the Abbotsford Community Services Fathering Initiative and the parent-child Mother Goose program in Punjabi. Buying a ticket is a great way to show support and who knows, you might even win!"

The draw will be held at noon on

June 24 at Martin Pontiac Buick GMC Ltd. in Chilliwack. With 20,000 tickets being sold, entrants have a one in 6,666 chance of winning a prize. Success by 6 early childhood initiatives work in more than 350 communities in North America, including 18 in B.C., to help children in their early years so that they will be successful learners when they start school. A highly innovative public/private partnership of the United Way of B.C., the Savings and Credit Union of B.C., and the provincial Ministry for Children and Family Development has enabled Success by 6 to expand quickly in the province.

According to Debbie Demash, Success by 6 co-ordinator for the eastern Fraser Valley, each of the initiatives is an autonomous, community-driven partnership of individuals, families, and organizations.

"We draw our strength from the community. Our common passion is to ensure children are ready to succeed when they enter school. Children who are healthy, safe, and secure have a much greater chance of becoming

successful learners and leading fulfilling lives."

The need for early childhood programs in B.C. is acute, Demash said.

"About 25 per cent of children entering school are simply not prepared socially or emotionally. Many are lacking in language and motor skills. These obstacles, coupled with the poverty that thousands of children live in, conspire to deprive many children of a reasonable chance of succeeding in school and life."

Demash is confident the raffle will raise much-needed funds for the Abbotsford area.

Tickets for the Success by 6 raffle can be purchased from Lucie Honey-Ray at 604-852-1236, at Fusion Credit Union branches in Abbotsford, or at numerous local events. For information about Success by 6, call Demash at 604-701-1040 or visit [www.successby6bc.ca](http://www.successby6bc.ca).

■ Submitted by Phil Sherwood ([info@shero.com](mailto:info@shero.com)). Sherwood is a Chamber member and sits on the council of partners for Success By 6 (eastern Fraser Valley).