



The Child Care Professional

Fall 2009

As always, we turn the corner into autumn with increased activity. We have taken additional measures to increase public awareness of the CCRR. We have partnered with CCRRs throughout our region, pooled resources, and placed information in magazines, specifically Urban Baby and West Coast Families. You will also find advertising on BC Transit appearing on buses, sky train and the Westcoast Express. Locally, we will continue our internet presence and regularly place feature advertisements in our local newspapers.

Thank you to all members who completed and returned their Membership Profile Form which was mailed out in early July. If you have not updated your membership profile, and have changes to your program which you wish to see reflected in our database, please complete the form and forward it to our Tri-Cities office. This information not only helps us to provide parents with the most accurate referrals, it enables us to keep our community abreast of any emerging trends in child care.

Our fall training schedule provides workshops with lots of interesting topics to explore. We have taken care to plan a wide range of workshop/training opportunities in an effort to meet the needs of those new to child care and inspire more established caregivers to continue along a path of life long learning. Just a reminder, our workshops fill very quickly, so register early to avoid disappointment.

Many of you are familiar with the Western Canada Family Child Care Association. They have proudly announced that the membership approved an official name change. The association will now be known as "British Columbia Family Child Care Association". This name will better represent the provincial profile of its membership. For more information, visit their website at www.bcfcca.ca.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the information about community Early Childhood Development (ECD) Committees. A number of communities across British Columbia have established ECD Committees that work to identify local priorities related to healthy development and well-being of young children (0 – 6 years of age) and their families, and to focus on strategies to address these priorities. You will find information regarding local initiatives on page 3 of this newsletter.

So, do look ahead to a busy fall season, but not before you take time to enjoy the remainder of the summer.

~Claire



Program Evaluation

Every year the CCRR asks child care providers to participate in a Program Evaluation. The survey results provide us with crucial information which we use to evaluate our current activities and helps us to plan for future activities.

Included in this newsletter is our 2009 Program Evaluation. The survey can be completed on the attached form and returned to our office in the self-addressed envelope, or can be accessed on the web at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Traw0gJKR8OUHwajSuJ_2bYA_3d_3d

We thank you in advance for your participation.

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Inserts in this issue:

- ✓ Fall Workshop/Training Schedule
- ✓ Fall Calendar
- ✓ Program Evaluations

YMCA Child Care Resource & Referral

www.vanymca.org

Tri-Cities

1130 C Austin Avenue
Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 3P5
Ph: 604-931-3400 Fax: 604-931-3440
Email: tricrr@vanymca.org

Monday to Friday
9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Burnaby/New Westminster

Burlington Square, Unit 161
5172 Kingsway
Burnaby, B.C. V5H 2E8
Ph: 604-294-1109 Fax: 604-294-6278
Email: bnwccrr@vanymca.org

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9:00 to 4:30 p.m.
1st & 3rd Thursday each month: 1:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
2nd Saturday each month: 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Please note: The Burnaby/New Westminster office will be opened on Saturday, October 24th in lieu of the October 10th office closure.

The Tri-Cities office will be closed on Wednesday, October 21st for a staff meeting and development day.

“Circle of Friends”

Family Resource Program

James Park Elementary

1761 Westminster Avenue, Port Coquitlam, B.C.
Ph: 604-931-3400
Tuesdays & Thursdays
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Central Elementary

2260 Central Avenue, Port Coquitlam, B.C.
Ph: 604-931-3400
Monday, Wednesday & Fridays
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Please note: Circle of Friends Family Resource Program operates on the School Calendar.

Multicultural Mornings @ the CCRR!

The YMCA CCRR staff and volunteers from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. host “Multicultural Mornings” at the Tri-Cities CCRR office the first Wednesday morning of each month from 9:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m.

If you know parents who speak Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese or Farsi and require information on the Child Care Subsidy program, information on child care, or child care referrals, please be sure to inform them of this opportunity. The next Multicultural Mornings are Wednesdays, October 7th, November 4th, and December 2nd.

Important News from the Ministry of Children and Family

The Minor Capital Funding for Emergency Repair, Replacement and Relocation, funding maximum has changed. Due to budget pressures it was necessary to revise the Minor Capital Funding levels. The maximum allowable grant is now \$2000 per application. For additional information visit www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/capital.htm.

Resource Lending Library News

Some changes have been made to our activity box reservation system. Beginning in September, caregivers interested in a specific activity box can put a ‘hold’ on the box for a period of one week if it is in office. If the box is not picked up within that time frame it will be put back into circulation.

To put a box on hold please call our Tri-Cities office at 604-937-1238 or our Burnaby/New Westminister office at 604-294-1109.

Laminator Available!

The YMCA CCRR has laminators available at both our Burnaby/New Westminister location, and our Tri-Cities office.

The Burnaby/New Westminister laminator can accommodate items 24” in width, and the Tri-Cities laminator is capable of laminating items 26” in width. Member rates are \$1.00 per linear foot and non-member rate are \$2.00 per foot.

If you have any questions regarding this service please contact our Burnaby/New Westminister or Tri-Cities office.

Early Childhood Development Committees

Welcome to the Burnaby Early Childhood Development Community Table

Who are we? The Burnaby ECD Community Table is a coalition of approximately 30 community and government partners offering programs, services, and resources to young children and their families in Burnaby. Our goal is to ensure that all children in Burnaby are supported by their community to reach their full potential.

Who is involved? The Table is made up of representatives from the school district, Fraser Health, MCFD, Parks & Recreation, the Library, the City of Burnaby Social Planning Department, and an array of community agencies that provide direct services to children and families. We also have members from Burnaby's many multicultural service agencies.

Website: Check out www.kidsinburnaby.ca We are happy to add new information of interest to Burnaby's families with young children. Please feel free to send us information you would like to share.

Invitation: The Burnaby ECD Community Table has a number of very active Action Teams, including a Child Care Action Team. New members are always welcome. We also have an active Parent Advisory Committee – again, new volunteers are most welcome.

Resources Available: We currently have an array of ECD resources available (development wheels, bibs, family calendars, puppets, bags). If you or the families you serve would like to receive any of these resources, please contact us.

Contact: Email Gabriella – gabe.maio@gov.bc.ca or call 604-660-7799.

Hello from the New Westminister Early Childhood Development Committee!

What are we? We are a group of community people who have come together with a common purpose of wanting to increase the health and well-being of young children and their families. We find ways to make the public aware of the strengths, needs and the gifts of young children & their families, and we advocate for accessible services for all children and their families.

Who are we? The Committee is made up of people who work indirectly with families and children from the City, Fraser Health, the School District, MCFD, United Way of the Lower Mainland, CCRR and those who develop and provide programming through non-profit or-

ganizations, faith groups, the Public Library, child care facilities, Parks & Recreation, plus parents and interested community people.

Website: Check out our new website – www.kidsnewwest.ca We are continuing to improve and add interesting information for New Westminster.

Invitation: We would love to have more voices from the child care sector, and we invite you to contact us for meeting times or to be put on the ECD contact list. We have a child care 'action team' dealing specifically with child care issues and we would love your input!

Contact: Email Dorothy – dorothy.polukoshko@gov.bc.ca or call 604-660-0310.

Greetings from the Tri-Cities Early Childhood Development Committee!

Who are we? The Tri-Cities ECD Committee supports the community's capacity to ensure the availability and accessibility of Early Childhood Development services for children (prenatal to age 6) and their families in the Tri-Cities area.

Who Sits on the Committee? The committee includes a cross-section of individuals, service providers, and representatives from all levels of government, from the Tri-Cities' communities with an interest in Early Childhood Development, community partnerships and the vision of the committee. Members include the following, but are not limited to, representatives from: Ministry of Children and Family Development, Fraser Health Authority, School District #43, Coquitlam, Municipalities of Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Port Moody and the Villages of Anmore and Belcarra, Community Service agencies, Child Care providers, Libraries, and Ministry of Housing and Social Development.

Website: Check out our website – www.tricitiesecd.citysoup.ca. Our website is currently in the process of being re-designed, so please check it frequently over the next few months.

Invitation: We welcome members of the child care community to attend our general monthly ECD meetings. We also have a Child Care Working group that meets in the evenings and specifically addresses issues of concern to the child care community. New members are always welcome. Please feel free to contact us for meeting times or to be put on the ECD contact list.

Contact: Email Susan – susan.foster@fraserhealth.ca or call 604-777-8706.



The Power of Observation

By Amy Dombro, Judy Jablon, and Margo Dichtelmiller

Young children need their families and caregivers to work together. It doesn't mean you have to be best friends, or even like one another—though it certainly makes life easier. What it does mean is that you have to see yourself as partners with the child's best interests as your shared concern. This partnership provides the continuity and support that children need to feel safe and secure enough to explore, play, enjoy, and learn in child care.

You and families each bring different sets of information to your relationship. You have worked with many children of similar ages over the years. You know about general patterns of child development and have developed a collection of strategies to support children's learning.

Parents and other family members focus on “their” child. They know the specific information about that one special child in their life. For example, they know about their child's culture, preferences, fears, and how a child responds in certain situations at home.

For caregivers to know a child well, they need both sets of information. You will never know what a family knows unless you create a relationship in which you can exchange information, ask questions, and listen to one another.

Appreciating and Liking a Child: A Starting Point to Building Relationships with Families

An experienced teacher and trainer, Elizabeth Servidio, once said, “It is very hard for parents not to like a teacher who really appreciates and likes their child.” Appreciating and liking a child is a good starting place for your relationship with families. Observing can help you get there.

We define observing as watching to learn. Observing creates an attitude of openness and wonder that allows you to know and understand the children you work with each day. When you observe, you slow down, listen to a child more carefully, and pause to reflect before leaping in to offer some direction or a helping hand. You see and respond to who a child is and what a child needs. Observing

helps you build relationships by revealing the uniqueness of every child—including the child's temperament, strengths, personality, work style, and preferred mode of expression.

For example, when you observe that Shawna is an infant who gets intensely upset when things change, you may respond by keeping her daily routine as consistent as possible. Knowing that Tommy naturally moves toward the painting table at choice time, you might observe that he paints lots of animals and then, later on, offer to read some animal stories with him.

But what about those children—and there are always some—whom you find unappealing or annoying and, to be honest, shy away from? The first step is looking beyond a child's drooling, crying, constant activity, shyness, or whatever other aspect of behaviour you find off-putting. The next step is finding a point of connection.

Observing can help you find a point of entry into a relationship with this child as it helps answer questions such as:

- What are the current issues the child is dealing with?
- In what situations does the child seem most comfortable?
- What causes the child's eyes to brighten, what brings a smile?
- What things does the child do well?
- What does the child talk, read, or write about?
- What does the child paint or build or draw?
- What are the main theme's of a child's dramatic play?
- Is there an adult, child or activity that seems to draw the child?

Sometimes the answers are evident—once you take the time to stop and look. When Korene's primary caregiver observes that Korene, age seven months, smiles and bounces up and down whenever she hears music, he decides to ask her parents what kind of music they listen to at home. When they volunteer to bring in some jazz tapes, he enthusiastically accepts and explains that with this music they will be creating a bridge between Korene's worlds of home and child care. After the tapes arrive, he makes a point of listening to and enjoying Korene's family's favourite music not only with her but also with the other children.

A preschool teacher shares this experience: Leticia, age three, whose home language is Russian, rarely speaks in school. One day we were talking about pets and Leticia didn't say a word. But the next day, she and her mom came



to school with Leticia's guinea pig from home. The teacher explains: "I found out Leticia understands more English than I thought she did. I knew I had to build on this. So I welcomed her mother and, with Leticia, showed her around the room. Then we wrote a story about Tiger, the guinea pig. Leticia worked on an illustration of what Tiger eats. I always have a camera on hand for moments like this so I took some photos of Leticia, her mom, and Tiger.

I gave one photo to Leticia and her mother to take home and kept some in our class photo album to remind Leticia and the other children of the special day Leticia's mother and Tiger came to school."

Other times discovering a point of contact with a child may require some flexibility and openness on your part. Getting to know the child who delights in the frogs she discovers during a class trip to a nearby pond may mean you have to reverse your somewhat negative attitude towards amphibians.

Building Trusting Relationships With Families Across Cultures

Each of us has a set of beliefs about ourselves, as well as attitudes, assumptions, and expectations about people and events around us—some that we may not even be aware of. This is culture. It is what makes each of us who we are. Anthropologist Ward Goodenough defines culture as "a set of standards or rules for perceiving, believing, acting, and evaluating others."

Our culture is reflected in our communication, expectations, and therefore our observations of others. How close you stand when you talk with someone, when you pause for the other person to respond, or if you meet someone's gaze when they look at you are examples of behaviours determined by culture.

Culture can be so subtle that it influences how we expect people to behave and the ways in which we interpret their behaviour. When people behave differently than we expect or when we misinterpret their behaviour, we may feel confused, frightened, or even look upon them negatively. These feelings get in the way of seeing, getting to know, and relating to a family member for whom he or she is and being able to work together in the best interests of a child you both care deeply about.

Here are some examples of how cultural differences got in the way of teachers as they worked to build relationships with children and families:

Beliefs About Child Rearing

Chloe's toddler son, Georges, sleeps with his parents just as Chloe did when she was a child. Rebecca, Georges' favourite teacher at child care, knows this and cannot accept it. She is constantly hinting that Georges' should be sleeping in his own crib. Chloe no longer feels comfortable talking with her. As a result, Rebecca, who spends eight hours a day, five days a week with Georges is missing out on the opportunity to learn more about Georges' life at home and cannot offer Georges the degree of continuity between home and child care that she could if she and Chloe were working together as partners.

Beliefs About Appropriate Ways to Communicate

At home, dinner time was filled with busy, interactive conversation during which Isabella's grandmother, mother, father, and sisters all talked continuously, adding to each other's stories as if they were weaving a quilt together. Often several family members talked at once—no one ever thinking that adding on to someone's story was an interruption.

Isabella came to her preschool classroom eager to share her ideas and experiences and add to the stories of others, just as she does every day at home. However, each time Isabella spoke, her teacher hushed her, saying that she had to raise her hand to talk. At first, Isabella would speak up while simultaneously raising her hand, but this led to more hushing. After a while, Isabella stopped talking. In this case of cultural differences, everyone ended up losing. Isabella's enthusiasm about school and her sense of self as a joyful contributor was diminished. Her teacher's need for order prevented her from connecting with Isabella and teaching her how to be an effective group member at school.

Like the teachers in these stories, it is easy to assume that your way is the right way. We all do this sometimes. The danger is that it closes you off to seeing and understanding that there are other possibilities. When it comes to culture, there are many right ways.

Understanding culture and cultural differences is not easy even when you have the best intentions and you and families are each invested in their child's well-being and learning. Here are some strategies that can help you get beyond barriers of cultural differences and build trusting relationships:

- Be aware of how your culture—your attitudes, beliefs, and expectations—shapes you as a person and teacher. This will give you some insight into the deep influence

culture has on others, including the children and families with whom you work.

- Observe to discover similarities as well as the differences between your culture and those of children and families. Like most of us, you may find similarities easier to deal with than differences. But remember, differences exist, and recognizing them is necessary before we can bridge them. Be open to and try to accept and acknowledge both.
- Seek more information to understand what culture means to each family and the ways in which it is reflected in their behaviour. Continue to observe and listen; as trust grows, share some of your questions and your own experiences and beliefs.



Cultural collisions and tensions between teachers and family members are part of life. If parents of the same child disagree, for example, about the right way to respond to a child’s challenging behaviour based on how they were raised, it is no surprise that caregivers and parents are caught short by differences not only between their own cultures but between the cultures of home and child care or school. The challenge is to get beyond asking what is right and wrong to being able to see another person’s point of view and to communicate openly, always keeping in mind your common goal of supporting the child.

Sharing Information With Families

When you and families share observations together, each of you can sharpen your picture of a child by validating, expanding, or calling into question something you have seen. Think about Georges and Chloe above and how their child care experiences might have been different if their parents and caregivers had been able to communicate.

Observations you record can provide you with rich examples to share with parents as questions or issues arise and, of course, during conferences which give you uninterrupted time to reflect about a child together. We recom-

mend that you also consider observing regularly with parents so you can pool your information, insights, and questions about a child in an ongoing dialog.

Be aware, however, that sometimes it sounds easier to review and use information from observation notes than it actually is. Notes have an amazing ability to end up in “Black holes”—pockets, filing cabinets, desk drawers—never to be seen again. And when they are sighted, they often tend to be in a state of confusion. During a recent workshop, a brave teacher held up a large jumble of post-it notes all stuck together in a clump. “I can find time to write my observations down,” she said. “But I never get back to them.” Laughter and a collective sigh of relief swept through the group. Clearly she’s not alone.

Here are some examples of systems shared with us by caregivers that have allowed them to gather information for and from families:

- “I’ve made a folder for each child. In each child’s folder I keep my observations and notes from other teachers and parents.”
- “I use index cards that I store in a small file box. I create a section for each child. I keep the cards and a pen on the top of the bookshelf so they are handy. I stick the cards in my pocket as I write on them; at the end of the day, I file them under the correct name.”
- “I keep a notebook for each baby in my room. Parents are welcome to take their child’s book home and add observations from home. It is working very well.”
- “We have portfolios for each child that I made out of an accordion folder. In each portfolio, we keep observations and samples of that child’s work that are shared with the child and his or her family. The child helps us choose which pieces of work to include. I keep my scribbled observations in a folder labeled with that child’s name and stored in my filing cabinet.”

Like all relationships, those with families take time to develop and require work to maintain—but they are well worth it. Observation can help.

Reference

Goodenough, W. (1981). *Culture, Language, Society*. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin Cummings Publishing.

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For Sale

Daycare Closed

Assorted items available, for more information, please contact Delma at 604-931-3240 or 604-767-5960

Building Relationships With Young Children

By George Scarlett

To say building relationships with young children is important seems so obvious as to be hardly worth mentioning—and that is the problem. It is so obvious that we don't give it much thought; don't go into what it really takes to build relationships, and so, don't often try to fully understand what it takes to build relationships with children. It's not that we are lazy or don't care. It's that the obvious deadens our normally curious nature, and makes us content to simply mouth the truth that building relationships matters. Here, then, I will try to make us uncomfortable about this subject that normally makes us feel downright cozy.

Building relationships with young children matters because without relationships, young children cannot thrive. Without relationships, even their physical health is at risk. There is a story about the pediatrician and former physician-in-chief at Boston's Children's Hospital, Charles Janeway, who sent a sick child home because the separation, not some medical condition, was what was undermining the child's health.

However, teachers can't solve problems by sending children home. Teachers have to build strong positive relationships with children—and for different reasons that maintain children's physical health. Teachers have to build relationships with children so that children feel secure enough to learn and motivated enough to be cooperative and exert self-control.

With respect to young children feeling secure, most of the talk about security has been about attachment to parents. However, in any given situation where young children find themselves without a parent, some other adult will suffice so long as that adult meets requirements for being an attachment figure (Kaye, 1982)

What are those requirements? Happily, they are just a few, ones that are attainable by anyone who is reasonably sensitive to the needs of young children. First there is being available. To be an attachment figure, adults need to be *on call* and available when children want or need them—that means being emotionally available as well as physically there.

Second, and this is harder to realize, adults need to understand that attachments are fostered by a variety of small acts other than by making physical contact. That is, in early childhood, attachment is not simply or mainly about physical contact and being held. It is about someone noticing what a child is doing and understanding a child's goals ("I see you making a green curvy line!"). It is about providing help when help is desired and needed ("You want help tying your shoes? Okay, but let's do it together."). It is about being an ally when trouble arises ("You say Billy took your marker. Let's go have a chat with Billy."). Fostering and maintaining positive attachments with young children means, then, doing a variety of little things we may normally do but without thinking of them as fostering attachments.

With respect to young children being motivated enough to cooperate with adults and exert self-control, positive relationships with teachers are essential. First of all, positive relationships provide needed leverage for making occasional demands on a child to behave. Young children aren't inclined to cooperate when they don't care about their relationships with adults. Why should they? What, really, have they got to lose? Time-outs and harsh words are nothing compared to losing the approval of someone who matters. And so, when adults build up positive relationships with children, they help children care about what adults want for and from them. One of the seldom understood truths in behaviour management is the truth that you can be tougher on psychologically healthy children with whom you have close relationships than on those who are less healthy, more disruptive, and more distant—precisely because the healthier children care about what you think of them. For those children who don't care, we need to work hard to help them discover the many positive benefits of having a close relationship with an adult who cares.

Mentioning behaviour management and challenging children bring us to the more difficult aspects of building positive relationships with children. With challenging children, we can do all the little things previously mentioned (giving attention, providing help, etc.) and still not succeed in fostering strong, positive relationships. With some, we need to do much more—particularly by communicating better and by managing dilemmas.

With respect to communicating better, today's diverse classrooms require teachers to become much more adept at communicating differently depending on the child. Some children take a friendly and reasonable way of communicating as a license to misbehave. Others take any hint at sternness as an indication that an adult is mean. Today's teachers need, then, to figure out what their ways of communicating mean to each and every child—and adjust their ways to meet



the needs and meanings of each child. When it comes to communicating and relationship building, one size definitely does not fit all.

This fact hit home to me when listening to my colleague, Cindy Ballenger, talk about her struggles to build relationships and manage the normal behaviour problems of the Haitian children in her charge (Ballenger, 1998). Cindy was failing as their teacher and needed to learn the Haitian way of communicating with her Haitian children when they were occasionally disruptive or out-of-control. Typical, North American ways of communicating were useless. Furthermore, she needed to learn not just the words used by Haitian parents and teachers but also the tone and physical posture they used to convey both firmness and care. Specifically, she needed to learn how, in the face of misbehaviour, she could pose a series of rhetorical questions often used by Haitian teachers—“Is this the way you act at home?”; “does your mother let you run around indoors knocking over things?” “Does your father let you talk mean to other kids” and so forth. It took time and effort and guidance from Haitian teachers for Cindy to learn; but when she did learn, there were no more problems getting her Haitian children to cooperate.

This is just one of many examples of the challenges facing today’s teachers when having to communicate and maintain positive relationships with a diverse group of children. Truly, our being such a diverse nation has made the job of teaching incredibly challenging—even as it has made it more rewarding.

However, perhaps the greatest challenge in building and maintaining positive relationships is the challenge to manage the dilemmas that come with managing behaviour problems. In particular, there is the problem of maintaining safety and order for the short-term without undermining the relationships that are needed if children are to thrive in the long-term. To be a good teacher (or parent, for that matter) is, then, to stay always caught in this dilemma rather than to opt for one extreme or the other.

Happily, there are a variety of ways to manage this short-term vs. long-term dilemma. For example, wise teacher become proactive by implementing tactics that prevent behaviour problems and reduce the need to use heavy-handed ways to control children, ways that might undermine their relationships. They do so by implementing good classroom routines, by having rules that the children have helped construct themselves, and by implementing curricular activities that interest children and promote constructive activity.

Wise teachers also react to problem behaviour with tactics that preserve their positive relationships with children. For

example, often one hears an experienced and wise teacher reframing just prior to setting a limit. I once heard such a teacher telling an impulsive little boy who had just grabbed an audiotape and was about to destroy it, “My you have quick hands!” Only then did she proceed to get him to handle the tape more carefully. These and other tactics say to a child, “Even though I am setting a limit and steering you in a direction different from where you were headed, I still like you and care for you.”

Another such tactic is what I call relationship referencing. Moments of misbehaviour can present opportunities to refer to one’s relationship with a child. For example, getting pleasure from being devilish, one little boy liked to run away from circle time. However, he stopped running away after his teacher said, “When you run away I don’t get to hear all those interesting things you have to say—like yesterday when you were telling us all about dinosaurs. That was really interesting.” In other words, this teacher found a way to tie this child’s disruptive behaviour to something positive about her relationship with the child.

These and other ways of maintaining positive relationships are needed by the boatload—so teachers need to stock up on tactics even as they adopt a relationship building approach to teaching. The distinction is important. An approach refers to one’s overall framework for thinking about what supports young children and their development. Tactics are particular actions that one employs with particular children in particular situations. Confusing the two can put unnecessary limits on acquiring new tactics—or it can make us lose track of the goals that really matter. Relationship building is central to the approach I have been discussing. It is the goal that really matters.

One last word with respect to this issue of building relationships with young children. You may have noticed that I have not mentioned self-esteem. I have not done so on purpose. Self-esteem need not be the focus when working with young children. In early childhood, the focus needs to be on relationship building. For young children, having close, positive relationships with adults fosters self-esteem naturally. Interesting how esteem for oneself is not the central issue in early childhood. Perhaps there is a lesson here for all of us.

References:

Ballenger, C. (1998). “Culture and behavior problems: The language of control.” In W. G. Scarlett and Associates. *Trouble in the classroom*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kaye, K. (1982). *The mental and social life of babies: How parents create persons*. Chicago: Chicago University Press

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The 23rd Annual Preschool Promenade Conference
presents:

**Preschool & Play
as a Learning Environment**

Saturday, September 12, 2009
8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Killarney Community Centre
2620 Killarney Street, Vancouver

This conference is recognized by the British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association. Each year, it successfully offers workshops that allow the participants to upgrade skills, stay on top of current issues and trends, and networks with other in the preschool field.

**For more information, please contact
Ramona Manzer at 604-777-5120**



Presented by North Shore Child Care Resource Program

**Good Beginnings:
Family Child Care Course**

6 Saturdays, September 26,
October 3, 17 & 31,
November 14 & 28, 2009
9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

North Shore Community Resources Society
Capilano Mall 203-935-Marine Drive
North Vancouver

The purpose of this course is to assist you in understanding the important information about family child care practices and children's development, so that you can offer high quality home-based family child care services. The course offers theories, examples and opportunities for you to practice.

**For more information, please
call Christine at 604-985-7138**

Introduction to School-Age Child Care

Instructor: **Mike Graham**

Thurs. Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2009 7:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m.
& Sat. Oct. 3 & 7, 2009 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Douglas College, New Westminster Campus

This course focuses on the concepts of child care, introductory developmental theory, self-concept, program planning, safety, behavior management and child care as a vocation.

**To view additional information on programs &
courses visit douglas.ca/ce/cfcs or call 604-527-5479**

Save the Date! *HELP Seminar*

The State of Children's Development in BC

Tuesday, October 27, 2009
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
SFU Harbour Centre
515 W. Hastings St., Vancouver

Professor **Clyde Hertzman** will provide the most recent results from early childhood research of the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). Now with the third round of BC population level data, this session will highlight key learnings and illustrate how these learnings can guide communities and government in building the most effective system of supports for young children and families.

Register at:

http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/events_events.htm

**13th Annual Children:
the Heart of the Matter Conference**

February 5–6, 2010
Earl Marriott Secondary School, Surrey, BC

Keynote Speakers:

Cindi Seddon—*When is it Bad Play and When is it Bullying: Determining the Appropriate Responses for Inappropriate Interaction between Preschool and Early School Age Children*

Dr. Deborah MacNamara—*The Heart of the Matter: Helping Children Grow Up*

Presented by Child Care Options Resource and Referral, in partnership with the Surrey School District, Office of Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care, and the Early Learning Partnership.

For more information call 604-572-8032

Infant Activities (6-17 months)

Can babies paint? Older infants can paint, too! Small amounts of non-toxic paint can be put on the high chair tray. Let the infant feel and squish the paint. She may put some in her mouth. It's ok. Just wipe her face and allow her to continue. Give her some leaves to crunch and feel. Give her some responsive simple words for her experience, such as 'wet, sticky, splat!, round and round etc'.

Build Relationships with Infants:

"Play is an important medium for fostering relationships ... they are given many opportunities to develop their social and cognitive skills" Authentic Childhood p 89.



6-9 months:

The Cushion Climb:

Babies need to climb. Heap a pile of firm couch cushions on the floors. The wee ones can climb the mountain! Stack them like 'stairs', and they can begin to master stair climbing safely. Play peek-a-boo behind the cushions. This helps babies trust that you always return.

9-12 months:

Sing lullabies and recite soft poetry with your baby. Hold her in your arms and sing long, gentle poems. This creates a sense of security and special bonding.

Related Recordings:

Daydreams and Lullabies by Sue Hammond

Baby's Bedtime and Baby's Morningtime by Judy Collins

12-15 months:

Let Your Baby Help:

Babies learn through imitations and they want to do what you are doing. Choose safe activities for him to help with. Sort the laundry with his help. Sorting is a skill. Ask him to bring you a sock etc. He can help in the kitchen too. Give him a wet cloth to wipe a table. Give her a bowl and wooden spoon, so she can stir when you stir.

15-18 months:

Changing Games:

Make a game of getting dressed and undressed. She can help by giving you her foot or raising her arm. Sing 'I'm going to take that sock right off of your foot' or 'I'm going to take that arm right out of that sleeve' to the tune of 'I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair' from South Pacific.



Dressing-Up:

Clothes are interesting to the young toddler. She likes to discover what 'me' is all about. Older toddlers 18 months+ are more into imaginative 'being other people' play. Offer fancy hats, slip on shoes, and soft scarves for dress-up fun.

Outdoor Activity:

Lie down on the ground where leaf cover is heaviest. Make 'angels' in the leaves, in the same way as snow angels. Cover each other with leaves. Play 'peek-a-boo'.



Share Food:

Apple harvest is a time to share. Apples come in many colours and tastes. Cut up several types of apples and let toddlers taste and share. Remember to take the peels off, and cut the slices very thin, as the peels can be a choke hazard because they are difficult to chew.

These infant activities are taken from the book Baby Games - The Joyful Guide to Child's Play from Birth to Three Years by Elaine Clow-Martin. This great book is available to borrow in the Burnaby/New Westminster resource library.

Toddler Activities (18-36 months)

Idea inspired from: *Authentic Childhood - Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the Classroom* by Susan Fraser. This wonderful book can be borrowed from our Burnaby/New Westminster resource library.

Mural Painting - Bring Autumn indoors!

Mural painting is a shared experience. It fosters relationships between children, as they learn to make space for their friends, trade colours and talk about what is happening. Allow the children to share their ideas and add to the experience.



In Autumn we reap and gather harvest. Go outside to play. Bring paper bags or buckets and gather fallen leaves with the children. Notice and talk about the many brilliant colours. Orange, yellow, brown, green and red are everywhere. Talk about how we 'all gather and work together' and collect the leaves. Listen to the children's observations.

Later, roll out a wide length of plain newsprint for the children to paint on together.

Make sure there is enough space for a few children to move around each length of paper. Toddlers need 'elbow room', as they love to make big gestures with the paint brushes. Provide various sizes of brushes, such as wide, round and flat. Toddlers work most comfortably with short handled brushes.

Pour small amounts of paint into safe jars - baby food jars or children's plastic paint containers work well. Paint must be water-soluble and non-toxic for children to use. Keep the paint thick. Non-toxic liquid tempera paint is available for low cost at local dollar stores. Provide a variety of autumn colours.

Lay the leaves around the edges of the paper. This provides inspiration. Children will probably paint the leaves, too. Toddlers need to *feel* the experience. It's okay if they play with leaves or break or crumble them into the mural.

Remember to prepare the environment first! Choose a flat surface that can be easily washed afterwards. There will be a mess! It is important that the children feel free to discover and let paint drip. Have wash cloths available for quick tidy-up of hands. Have a few old cloths for clean up of bigger spills.

Children use paint to explore its physical properties. "They are fascinated by the way it drips down the page and by how it can be applied to the paper.." and "they discover the way colours change when they overlap on the paper" *Authentic Childhood* pg 212.

This activity "sets the stage for productive conversation in the following ways:

- Listening to children and following up on their interests
- Encouraging children to express their ideas
- Enabling children to make their thinking visible
- Building on children's ideas
- Allowing for input from children in planning the content
- Supporting the children to work together in a group
- Emphasizing the importance of listening to and respecting one another's ideas and opinions" *Authentic Childhood* pg 81, 82.

Related Books:

Autumn Leaves by Ken Robbins

This book is a photo essay. Children take a walk through nature. Leaves are shown in life size form as they go through colour changes. The words are simple for toddlers to understand.

A Poem with Actions:

Stand with the children and say/sing the poem. Move your hands as though they are leaves floating down to the ground. Then use your hands and arms to mimic the way wind blows leaves around. End by floating your body to the ground in a quiet way.

'Autumn leaves are falling
Autumn leaves are falling
On the ground
On the ground
Wind picks them up again
Wind picks them up again
Falling down
Falling down'



Preschool (3-5 years)

The great thing about the fall is.... There are a multitude of gifts from nature falling from the trees, growing from the earth and animals become more visible as they prepare for the upcoming winter. Children can learn wonderful things as they explore their world around them. When you follow their lead their play can extend itself to new areas of inspiration in the dance between cooperative learning and a prevocational environment.

Math: Counting/Colour Recognition

Have the children go on a 'Nature Hunt' played much like a Bingo card where children try to find the pictures on their card and mark it with an "X" when found!

Sensory: Playdough

Add a little pumpkin spice or cinnamon to your playdough recipe.

Music/Movement: Squirrel Song

Here is a fun action chant about squirrels in the fall.

Gray Squirrel, Gray Squirrel

Shake your bushy tail (*pretend to shake tail*)

Gray Squirrel, Gray Squirrel

Shake your bushy tail (*pretend to shake tail*)

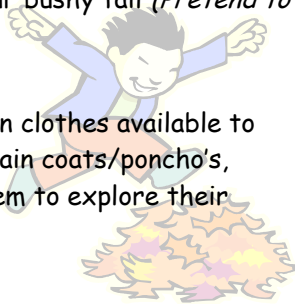
Wrinkle up your funny nose (*act out line*)

Put a nut between your toes (*pretend to eat a nut*)

Gray Squirrel Shake your bushy tail (*Pretend to shake a tail*)

Dramatic Play: Props

Have a variety of autumn clothes available to children. (Hats, boots, rain coats/poncho's, rakes etc.) and allow them to explore their 'outdoor world' inside!



Literacy: Acorn Song (This is sung to the tune of BINGO.)

There is a nut that squirrels eat-
and ACORN is its name-o

A-C-O-R-N, A-C-O-R-N, A-C-O-R-N,
and ACORN is its name-o.

Repeat to the "BINGO" tune and as you turn over the letters say CRUNCH in their place Eg. Crunch-C-O-R-N....Crunch-Crunch-O-R-N....Crunch-Crunch-Crunch-R-N

Science: Experimenting: Prediction/Theorizing/'Sink & Float

At circle time have various sized pumpkins & other assorted nature items, pinecones, stones, pieces of wood, whatever you can think of, (fall items like ornamental gourds are great) & let your preschoolers predict "Will it float?" Use a large clear storage container (or your water table if you're lucky enough to have one) & fill it with water & start the experiment! To extend on the activity you can have children chart the results with a simple grid of pictures and add some letter recognition with "S" for sink and "F" for float.



Sample Above

Cooking: Cooking: Easy Pumpkin Pudding

This activity helps children with measuring as they cook up this autumn treat. Materials and Ingredients:

-1 cup vanilla pudding for each child

-A bowl for each child

-2 tsp. Libby's easy pumpkin pie mix per child

-A spoon for each child

Description: Help young children measure and place one cup of vanilla pudding in their individual bowls. Next, with each child, measure out 2 tsp. of pie mix. Ask children to mix the vanilla pudding and the pie mix together for a seasonal and yummy treat.

School-Age (6-12 years)

Here is a great activity for learning about ALL NATURAL "dyeing".

Paint with Nature & Dyeing with Nature

Items you will need: Fruits or vegetables and other natural items such as beets, blueberries, purple cabbage, spinach, red onion skins, coffee grounds, dandelion flowers to name a few.

Pots, Water, Pot holder, brush, paper, white cotton, twine, scissor, newspaper, nontoxic white glue (optional)

Make natural dyes by simmering beets, berries, onion skins, or other items until the water turns colour.

Remove the vegetables, then reserve the water and let it cool (the vegetables can be saved for soups, the fruit for puddings, and the onion skins tossed away!) The child can help with the cooking by placing the items in the pot (one fruit or vegetable per pot) and adding the water.

After the coloured water has cooled, the child can use it to paint on paper or to dye cotton strips (from an old sheet). To dye the material, let it soak in the vegetable dye for an hour, and then set it to dry on newspaper. To give a 'tie-dyed' effect the children can add elastic bands to the fabric they don't want to receive colour. As a future activity, the child can make several colours of twine and then use the natural dyed twine for a collage.