



YMCA

The Parent Page

"Your community's best source of child care information and resources"

Winter 2009

From Hitting to Words

By Betsy Mann

The current social climate of zero tolerance for violence has made us very sensitive to physical aggression, even in very young children. Sometimes, parents and caregivers seem to feel that there's something seriously wrong if some toddlers push and shove the other children at playgroup. In fact, it's normal for babies and young children to communicate with their bodies. As part of growing up, they learn that it's not okay to hurt other people and that there are better ways to interact socially.



Is this normal?

A study on a very large number of children in Canada found that "physical aggression starts at about nine months and peaks between 27 and 29 months, when 53.3 percent of boys and 41.1 percent of girls try it out. By about age three, most children learn to use alternative, prosocial strategies rather than physical aggression."

For some children, it may take longer. In particular, children who are slow to speak are more likely to hit,

bite and grab toys. Until their language skills catch up, they count on action to get their message across.

Minimizing aggression

The toddler who hits or bites at playgroup shouldn't be treated in the same way as the Grade 3 bully who starts a fist fight in the school yard. And a two year old who grabs a toy from a younger child won't necessarily end up intimidating classmates in high school. But parents still can't ignore the behaviour.

They can act to:

- Prevent the conditions which lead to aggression
- Supervise and redirect play where necessary
- Teach social skills
- Give children chances to practice.

Prevention

Children are more likely to push and grab when they feel crowded, over stimulated and stressed. If you see a child who has trouble controlling physical aggression in a group, check for these factors:

- Too many people in a small space?
- A room set-up that encourages disorganized running around? (better done outdoors)
- A high noise level, echoing off walls and ceiling?
- Not enough toys for the number of children?
- Expectations that children sit still for a long time?
- Bad timing in the child's routine? (Children who are hungry and tired lose control more quickly.)

If you can't change the environment or the schedule, maybe you could shorten the time the child spends in the group. But don't give up on all group experiences; progress comes with practice.

Supervision

You may be looking forward to socializing with other parents at playgroup, but don't expect babies or toddlers to manage on their own for long. You need to stay close so that you can see when to join in the game. Sometimes little ones need you to smooth out the rough spots for them. Be ready to pick up your child and start playing with another toy across the room.

Cont...


 Child Care Resources & Referrals

Burnaby/New Westminster 604-294-1109
email: bnwccrr@vanymca.org

Tri-Cities 604-931-3400
email: tricccrr@vanymca.org



*the YMCA CCRR is funded by the
Province of British Columbia*



With practice, you'll be able to see trouble coming and know when it's time to start a song or bring out the snack. Later, when they are preschoolers, your adult conversations will last longer, but between about nine months and three years old, you need to keep eyes and ears open, for your child and for the others.

Teaching

Gradually, children learn to communicate with language instead of actions. You can help by giving them the words they need to use:

- words for asking—"Now it's my turn."
- words for inviting—"You can play with us."
- words for understanding—"I think Ty wants to play with the train too."
- words for feelings—"That made you really angry!"

You can rehearse some of these words before your child goes to play with others: "If Maria wants to play with the same toy as you, what could you say?"

Practice

At first, your baby and toddler practice taking turns and sharing toys by playing with you. You're more patient than their friends! They will also learn by interacting in a group of other children, especially if they see the same children week after week. They get comfortable together and learn to interpret each other's cues. Over

time and with adult guidance, the physically aggressive children gradually start using other strategies; the timid children learn to stand up for themselves.

Learning takes time

Like any skill, learning to get along with other people takes time. Even if learning doesn't go smoothly at first, don't give up. With prevention, supervision, teaching and practice, your persistence will pay off.

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Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland

Become a Mentor... Become a Friend to a Little Sister!

"Sharing a few hours a week with a child or teen is the most precious gift you can give and it can be the most positive and everlasting impact on a child's life choices and view of themselves."—Keesha (current Big Sister & former Little Sister).

Visit www.bigsisters.bc.ca or call 604-873-4525 ext. 300 & find out more about these great volunteer opportunities and how you can make a difference

Spirit of the Children www.sotcs.ca

Spirit of the Children Society offers a wide range of programs to help strengthen relationships with children and families.

Aboriginal Fathers Drop-in Sharing Circle and Activities

Spirit of the Children Society is now hosting a weekly Drop in for Dad's and their children where there will be sharing circles, community kitchens and other fun activities or outings.

Location:

Spirit of the Children Society, 201 768 Columbia Street, New Westminster.
Every Tuesday from 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.
To attend contact Jair Machado at 604-524-9113 ext. 2238 or email j.machado@sotcs.ca

Traditional Regalia Making

Spirit of the Children Society is providing the Tri-Cities Aboriginal Families with children from 0–6 years of age an opportunity to come out and make Traditional Regalia.

Location:

SHARE Family & Community Services, 2615 Clarke Street, Port Moody.
Every Wednesday beginning January 14, 2009 from 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.
Please call Cheryl to pre-register at 604-524-9113 ext. 2232

HealthLink BC

B.C. residents have trusted health information at their fingertips with just a phone call or a click away with HealthLink BC. Just three numbers **8-1-1** on the phone or online at www.healthlinkbc.ca means easy access to non-emergency health information.

Speak with a nurse about your symptoms, consult with a pharmacist about your medication, or get healthy eating advice from a dietitian. You can also find the publicly funded health services and resources you need, closest to you.

Any time, in over 130 languages on request, HealthLink BC is as close as your phone or the web 24/7.





Circle of Friends

Circle of Friends at Central Elementary will now be open for two additional sessions.

Our new hours will be:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays from 9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. and Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.

Nestor Family Resource Program

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the YMCA Circle of Friends have formed a partnership to open a new Family Resource Drop-In program at Nestor Elementary in Coquitlam, open Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00 a.m.– 11:30 p.m.

For additional information call
Catherine at 604-937-1239

Tri-City Men's Resource Centre

Doin' The Dad Thing!

This is a unique program for new Dads to learn about their new baby and the many changes that occur from 0-36 months. Additionally, Dads will learn about father-child activities that encourage appropriate stimulation, basic care skills and child safety. Dads are provided an opportunity to ask questions without being judged.

When: Tuesdays, beginning January 6, 2009
(This program runs once a week for approx. 6 months)
Time: 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.
Location: 2062 Manning Avenue, Port Coquitlam

To register and for more information, please call
Patricia at 604-908-6345 or email at
patricia@tcmrc.net

Coquitlam Public Library

Korean Child Mother Goose

A bilingual program in English and Korean every Friday where children aged 3-5 and their parents can enjoy rhymes, songs and stories using the popular Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Snacks are provided. This program is free of charge but registration is required.

When: Begins January 9
Time: 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Location: Coquitlam Public Library,
575 Poirier Street, Coquitlam



For more information, please call
Shirley at 604-937-3221

Family Services of Greater Vancouver

Baby Talk

If you're interested in the growth and development of your child, and meeting other new parents, this fun, social and educational drop-in program is for you! Talk with a Public Health Nurse and listen to a speaker. FREE.

When: Wednesdays January 7-March 25
Time: 1:00 p.m.–2:45 p.m.
Location: Centennial Community Centre
65 East Sixth Avenue, New Westminster

For more information call, 604-777-5100

Citysoup.ca

Introduction to Digital Imaging

Learn about digital images; how to download images from digital cameras, do basic photo editing with Microsoft Photo Editor and attach files or photos to emails. FREE

When: Monday January 19 or February 9
Time: 6:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.
Location: Innovation Centre , 1207 Pinetree Way Coq.

Register at <http://signmeup.coquitlam.ca/signmeup>

City of Port Moody Library

Family Fun Nights

Explore the letters of the alphabet through stories, songs, and an easy craft. Build important pre-reading skills and take home some fun activities.

When: January 29, February 26, & April 1
Time: 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.
Location: Port Moody Library
100 Newport Drive, Port Moody

To register please call 604-469-4577 or
email askthelibrary@cityofportmoody.com

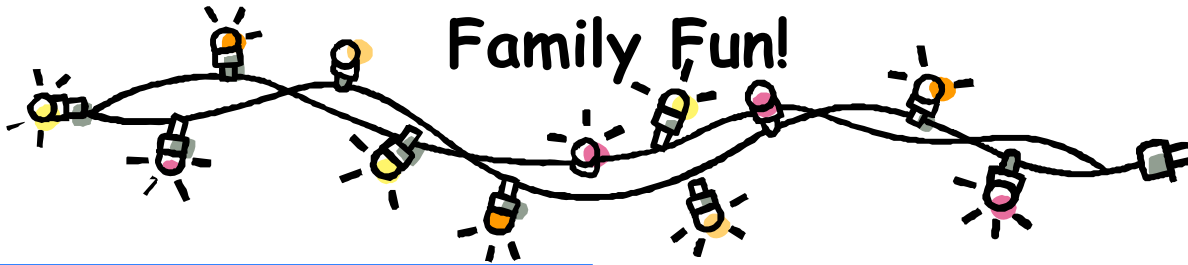
Healthy Kids Preschool Fair

Visit a health nurse, play on an indoor playground, take part in activities and crafts. Community agencies are on hand to answer questions. Free admission.

When: Tuesday, February 10
Time: 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Location: Cameron Complex, 9523 Cameron St. Bby

For more information, call 604-421-5225
www.city.burnaby.bc.ca





12th Annual Seasonal Celebration

Shadbolt Centre for the Arts
6450 Deer lake Avenue, Burnaby
Thursday, December 4th
5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Free Admission. This family event features music, dance and theatre, hands on family activities and the ever popular wreath making workshop to celebrate this festive season.

For more information, call 604-291-6864
www.city.burnaby.bc.ca

Winter Nature Walk

Burnaby Lake Regional Park
4519 Piper Avenue
Sunday, December 7
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Come on a brisk, guided winter walk along forest trails to discover wildlife and birds in the park. Then, return to the Nature House for delicious complimentary refreshments.



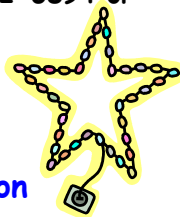
For more information, call
604-520-6442 or email
bbylakeparkassn@hotmail.com

Hyack Santa Claus Parade of Lights

Saturday, December 6th
4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Holiday-makers can welcome Jolly Ol' St. Nick to New Westminster, from bands playing Christmas music and marching quickly to keep warm, to floats featuring reindeer, elves, candy canes and toys, the parade is a swirl of colour and lights that is not to be missed.

For more information, call 604-522-6894 or
visit www.hyack.bc.ca



The 4th Annual Envision Financial Light the Lake

Lafarge Lake Park, Pinetree Way, Coquitlam
Sunday, December 7
4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

This fun-filled family event is a great way to kick-off the Christmas season. Enjoy carol singers, mulled apple cider and cookies, as well as a host of children's activities and crafts.

For more information call,
604-777-6168 or 604-469-3137



Festival du Bois

Mackin Park
1000 Brunette Avenue, Coquitlam
March 7-8th
9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Join the celebration of Canadian folk, Celtic and world music, dance, craft and food...All with a French twist! Great fun for the whole family!

For more information,
call 604-936-0039
www.festivaldubois.ca

