



CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

APRIL 2011

From My Window

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Well it is hard to believe we are almost through another programming year and what a year it has been. Our staff has been busier than ever with an average of 700 children on the caseload every month. And the kids...well they just keep on growing. Many will be transitioning to kindergarten next year and we have spent the year helping families get ready for this exciting next step.

Our Integrated Therapeutic Preschool runs until mid-June. Other groups have wrapped up for the year as staff are concentrating on working with the clients and their families as well as trying to see kids on the waitlists. Trips to the communities are continuing right through to June.

We also had a busy year with other projects. We are very pleased with our 'new bus' and once again thank all those who made donations and all the people who made our raffle a huge success. The kids will be able to get on and off with more independence and the staff will be able to help without being hunched over!! The bus is equipped with a wheel chair lift and has room for two wheel-chairs. CDC also embarked on the strategic planning process and are working on a final draft

of a 5 year plan. We had a chance to talk with staff, board members, parents, and community members and we are confident we have developed a plan that will continue to move the Centre forward.

We were honored to have a visit from her Excellency, Sharon Johnston, when she and her husband, the Governor General, were in Whitehorse in February. She had a great time meeting some of our children and families and was definitely impressed with our programs.

Our Annual General Meeting is just around the corner and will be held here at the Child Development Centre on Thursday, June 9th over the lunch hour. Please join us if you can or if you have any questions call us at 456-8182.

That's all for now....I hope you have a chance to get out and start enjoying the longer and, with any luck, warmer days.

Alayne

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Comings and Goings

Well we had a few comings and goings since our last publication.....Brooke McKenzie left to work in Haiti for 6 months (it was 33 degrees there today) but will be back after the summer. Kaya Downs traveled up the highway in the middle of January to take her position.

Rachel Moser left on maternity leave in November and Jessica van Wylick was hired to fill in. Congratulations to Rachel and her family on the birth of her son, Nigel. Jenn Bugg was also hired as a program assistant here in Whitehorse. Cheryl Keleher

returned after a leave – Welcome back Cheryl.



The Book Mark

What's new at the CDC Library?

We have some great new books in our library—for everyone to enjoy! Here are just a few:



For Parents:

- Hold On To Your Kids
- How Babies Talk
- Early Listening Skills
- Attachment Focused Parenting
- No-Cry Potty Training Solution
- Teaching Motor Skills

For Kids:

- Feet are not for Kicking
- Froggy Eats Out
- Froggy Gets Dressed
- In the Forest
- Louie's Hat
- Love from Lousia
- Max's Birthday
- My Buddy



The library is located on the main floor just down the hall from the main office. If you see some books you would like to borrow, please bring them to Jenny at the front desk and she will help you!

From the Mouths of Kids

After many nights of their son coming into bed with them, the parents decided it was time for him to sleep in his own bed. They told him tonight he must spend the entire night in his own bed. His response: "If you slept in my bed, I wouldn't have to go to yours."

One day a mom was tying up her son's skates before a game when he said, "You've done them up too tight; I can't breathe!"

After coming in from playing outside, the little girl looked at her muddy shoes and said, "Mom, the mud had a misunderstanding with my shoes and me!"



Parent Story

Hi, my name is Nicole and this is our family's story.....

As an Early Childhood Educator who worked in the Territory for over 10 years, I know on a professional level the wonderful things the staff at the Child Development Centre does for children and their families across the Yukon. When I became a parent it was an obvious choice to enroll my son in the Follow Along Program at the CDC because I knew it was the best way to track his growth and development. Boy, are we glad we did!

My son Griffin started off pretty much just like any other baby – healthy, happy, and meeting his milestones; but by eight months old we were starting to notice some differences and delays. He had a hard time transitioning

onto solid foods, his babbling just didn't sound right, and he was not where he should have been with his gross motor skills. Our therapist, Sheila, from the Follow Along Program and I were a bit concerned and started to meet more regularly to keep a closer watch on his development.

By 17 months old, it was glaringly obvious that something was wrong. Griffin was not yet walking, he only had a handful of words (that only I could understand), and food was becoming a big issue. With a recommendation and support from Sheila, we were put on the wait list for a full developmental assessment which included an evaluation by the visiting pediatrician.

Just after Griffin turned 2, we had the results from the assessment. The pediatrician thought that further

medical testing was needed to rule out certain genetic conditions that could possibly be the root cause of his delays. Another long few months of waiting for the results and we had our answers and they were shocking. Griffin had none of the conditions he was tested for but what they discovered was that he had a rare genetic condition called Mosaic XYY Syndrome. We were all left with unanswered questions. Neither myself, nor the staff at the CDC had ever heard of this condition. My family doctor had no clue and the pediatrician needed to do research to provide us with any information.

Griffin is the only reported case in the Yukon and as a team we have been learning as much as possible so we can provide him with the best support. Since our diagnosis, the staff at the

CDC has been wonderful and we have had a full team which includes an OT, PT, and SLP, and the occasional check-in with Leona to see how we are doing. Our therapists have been great at scheduling therapy sessions around my work schedule and with Griffin's daycare daily schedule. It has been amazing. Everyday my son asks if today is a CDC day and he is always excited to visit. The atmosphere in the building has always been warm and welcoming. The 2011/2012 year will be our final year at the CDC as Griffin will prepare for kindergarten and I am dreading leaving the comfort and support the CDC has provided for our family. There are definitely not enough words to express the gratitude for these amazing people who are dedicated to helping children and their families.

Road Trip!

By Anne-Marie DaSilva

Several years ago we headed south to Schuswap Lake, BC in search of a beach with warm water. Our energetic and spirited boys were 4 and 6 at the time. We had three weeks to drive there and back and hang out at a friend's cabin on the lake. On the first day we had a late start and made it to Teslin. On the second day we arrived in Watson Lake around dinner time....we soon realized we needed to pick up the pace if we were going to have any time to spend at the beach!

Some things that helped us actually enjoy the long drive were:

- Trying to be organized (quick and easy access to food, camping gear, toys and other essentials)
- Of course, driving longer distances when our small passengers were napping
- Snacks in small packages for in the car (dry, not gooey; somewhat healthy!)
- Beverage containers that won't spill if tipped over
- Books with DVD's,
- magnetic board activities, music (parent and child type tunes) and favourite games and toys
- Electronic devices were not as big a part of our children's lives as they are today.... We left the devices in the car while taking breaks along the way and while we were in camp grounds
- Movement breaks for kids and adults were essential. Parks and school playgrounds in any community provided opportunities to get rid of pent up energy.
- My husband and I took turns when we needed a break from our happy family. Something as simple as going for a walk or run while the children played at the park.
- Don't forget babies

need a break from their car seats. We spread a blanket on the ground and let the boys stretch their bodies when they were little.

Everybody has their own great ideas to make a road trip as fun and bearable as can be. These were a few of ours. If you're planning a trip

this summer, I hope it's a safe, happy and great adventure!



Research Ramblings

By Leona Cornière, Registered Psychologist

Parents and Self-Care

While being a parent brings joy, pride, personal growth, and many other pleasurable experiences, those with children know that it can also bring a lot of challenges. These challenges may be rooted in busy schedules, financial difficulties, social or geographical isolation, balancing work with family, and other stressors. Researchers are finding that these challenges can have an impact on parents. For example, one study found that parents of all types tend to suffer more symptoms of depression than non-parents. This study demonstrated that parents need to take care of their own emotional well-being, as well as their children's, and find enough social support for themselves and their family.

There is no one way to lessen the pressures and stress associated with caring for children. Self-care, however, is the most effective way to promote personal well-being and create a nurturing, loving environment. Parents who identify and meet their own needs model for children what it means to value their bodies and minds. With the constraints of time and resources, many parents and caregivers routinely sacrifice their own needs. This strategy results in a failure to fully meet their own, as well as their children's needs.

Self-care is the maintenance of personal well-being. It is any activity of an individual, family or community, with the intention of improving or restoring wellness, both physically and mentally. Individuals do self-care, and professionals may assist with and support self-care.

Adults and children both share six categories of basic needs. These needs are common to all people in varying degrees. These needs include physical, emotional, social,

intellectual, spiritual and creativity. What differs is the way that individuals choose to satisfy these needs.

Self-care ideas:

- Prepare a few days' worth of healthy dinners in advance, so they're ready when you need them the most.
- Keep nutritious snacks on hand.
- Avoid relying on caffeinated drinks and sugary foods for energy. They won't keep you going for long.
- Take an afternoon nap if it refreshes you, but don't snooze longer than 20 minutes, or you'll disrupt your nighttime sleep.
- Do deep breathing exercises.
- Get a therapeutic massage.
- Treat yourself to a new body cream or lotion.
- Wear your favorite, comfortable clothing.
- Exercise.
- Soak your feet in warm, soapy water.
- Join yoga or stretching class.
- Take a long walk.
- Read.
- Spend time with people who are affirming, optimistic and nurturing.
- Play outdoors (e.g., skiing, rollerblading, walking).
- Save notes and letters that are complementary. Read them often.
- Learn new skills.
- Engage in a new hobby.
- Write down self-positive adjectives.
- Notice and appreciate humor.
- Meditate.
- Take at least thirty minutes alone time per day.
- Watch a comedy movie.
- Light candles.
- Play with puzzles, clay or play dough with your child.
- Image and visualize - concentrate on a comforting scene.
- Look at comforting photos (e.g., loved ones, vacations).
- Find a special, quiet place and make it your own.
- Eat healthy snacks, watch nutrition, and take vitamins.
- Plan ahead - schedule medical and dental appointments.
- Nourish your body with healthful warming soups.
- Allow yourself to discover new things about 'you.'
- Notice your strengths.
- Realize that wherever you are today is the place to start.
- Be creative....sing, dance, paint or write.
- Share happiness with someone else.
- Do something you've never done before.
- Nurture a loving atmosphere in your home.
- Enjoy a nice cup of coffee or tea in silence.
- Sit and listen to music that makes you feel good.
- Dance all by yourself to really loud, fun music.
- Talk on the phone to friends or do not answer the phone at all.
- Prepare yourself a good home-cooked meal.
- Do a crossword.
- Plant a garden, pick fresh flowers or buy a small bouquet.
- Take the time to write in a journal.
- Enjoy a manicure or pedicure - share the experience with a friend.
- Laugh from the belly.

Parents who identify and meet their own needs model for children what it means to value their bodies and minds.

Evenson RJ, Simon RW. Clarifying the Relationship Between Parenthood and Depression. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*. December 2005.



Team Updates

FASD Diagnostic Support Team

The FASD Diagnostic and Support Team continues its work in providing assessment, diagnostic, and follow up supports to children and families living with FASD. The work of the team is guided by the knowledge that early identification and diagnosis can promote a better understanding of FASD and can help to facilitate access to support services for both children and their families. Team members include a psychologist, a speech language pathologist, an occupational therapist, a physiotherapist, a pediatrician, and a team coordinator. Families and caregivers are very important partners for the team in ensuring that the assessment and diagnostic process is tailored to meet the unique needs of the child and the family.

This year the team was excited to present at, and attend, the FASD symposium held in Whitehorse this past September. It was a great opportunity for the team to share knowledge gained over the years, to learn from the work of others, and to connect with others in the community working in the field of FASD.

If you would like more information about the FASD Diagnostic and Support Team please contact Andrea Mainer at (867) 456-8193 or email: andrea.mainer@cdcuyukon.ca

Faro

Have you heard Faro referred to as an 'up & coming' retirement community? Well, let me tell you about it from the other end of the age spectrum – preschoolers & their families. The CDC has been visiting the community of Faro for about 20 years and, in those years, we have seen lots of 'flux'. As a matter of fact, there were a number of years where we would drive in, say hello to our friends at the Del Van Gorder school and the Faro Health Center and then make a couple of home visits. Then it happened. A couple of years ago the CDC heard about a playgroup that takes place twice a week, organized by a local 'Super-Mom', Heather Grantham. The group meets in the gymnasium of the Faro Rec Center and we figured we should check it out. Talk about a baby boom - Wow! My first thought was, "If this is a retirement community, where did all these families with young children come from?" That was 2 years ago. We now visit that playgroup on every trip and have a great time playing & visiting with the parents. There has been considerable interest, among these families, in the Follow Along Program and we have made many new friends.

The increased number of young children in the community has now hit the school and this year there was a fairly large K4/5 class. The Child Development Center hired Diana Rogerson in September 2010 to work as a Program Assistant in that class. Diana's role has been to provide extra support for the four year olds as they make this important transition into the school system.

It has been a great year and we look forward to another one next year – and for as long as Faro continues to have lots of little people to keep all the retirees on their toes!

Kate Buerge, Developmental Therapist

Staff Spotlight... Leona Cornière



Working at the Child Development Centre for over 20 years has rooted me in an organization that is dynamic, progressive, and 'dear to my heart.'

What keeps me at the Centre is the children, families, and supportive colleagues. Since moving from Montreal to the Yukon in 1989, I have filled many roles at the Child Development Centre including preschool teacher, developmental therapist,

program coordinator, and interim executive director. I believe I have finally found my niche in my current role as a registered psychologist. As you may have surmised from my evolving roles at the Centre, I have never really stopped furthering my education. To continue this quest to learn I am currently pursuing my certification in play therapy. I am also a board member of the national Northwest FASD Research Network, as well as a member of a

research project that focuses on mental health and young children through the Hinks Dellcrest Centre in Toronto. Outside of work I like to read, write, hike, and spend time with my family.

Staff Spotlight... Christel Bartczak



Hailing from Quebec, I first came to the Yukon in 2003, to work as a guide for wilderness paddling trips. I immediately fell in love with the Yukon and its people, and continued to spend most of my summers here until 3 years ago, when I decided to finally make it my permanent home. Bringing with me a background of orthopaedic and sports medicine physiotherapy, I joined the Child Development Centre team in the spring of 2009. I feel

as though I have really found my niche, working with young children and their families in Whitehorse and in communities throughout the Yukon. The progressive and very supportive work environment at the CDC has made it a very rewarding place to work, and the many children and families who have let me share part of their lives make it worth it every day.

During my free time, I like to take advantage of the multitude of outdoor opportunities that are

available here in the Yukon, whether it be paddling, backcountry skiing, mountain biking or dog mushing. In the winter, I volunteer with the Kwanlin Dun Koyotes Ski Club, accompanying and coaching school-age children on the cross-country ski trails around Whitehorse. I also teach various Red Cross First Aid courses through the Yukon College, and enjoy practicing yoga as often as possible, which helps keep me grounded both in my work life and personal life.

Outreach Travel Schedule

MAY

11	Carmacks
16-18	Dawson City
17-19	Old Crow
17-19	Faro and Ross River
24-26	Beaver Creek, Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing
25	Carcross
26	Haines Junction
31-June 2	Watson Lake

JUNE

6	Teslin
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Helping Hearts is a project with the goal of being able to provide free photography sessions for families with children who are experiencing a life-altering illness or disability. Over the last couple of months, Helping Hearts has acquired an entire team of photographers who are dedicated to donating their time to Helping Hearts because they believe in sharing the gift of photography with as many families as possible.

Throughout a child's life, most families probably wouldn't expect their child to become ill, and possibly be hospitalized, or confined to home. This journey can cause a roller coaster of emotions for families – confusion, sadness, hope, celebration, and grief. During these times of transition, families may not have considered how important it may be to preserve the precious changes in their children. As parents and photographers, our team knows families will cherish these captured moments.

If you are a family looking to book a session with a photographer in your area please email info@helping-hearts.ca.

Upcoming Events

The Whitehorse Health Centre nurses invite all children turning 3 or 5 in 2011 to the following:

3 YEAR OLD HEALTH FAIR

Wednesday, May 4th anytime from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

5 YEAR OLD HEALTH FAIR (PRE-KINDERGARTEN)

Thursday, May 5th anytime from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

OR

Friday, May 6th anytime from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

We will be checking height and weight, and updating immunizations.



For 5-year-olds, we will also be checking vision and hearing. Health and safety information will be available in a fun-filled atmosphere that kids will love!

The Whitehorse Health Centre is located at 9010 Quartz Road

Our Annual General meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, June 9th at noon at the Child Development Centre**. If you are free, please drop by. Snacks will be provided.

Thank You!

We'd like to extend a special thank you to our volunteers:

Our librarians, Maggie Griffiths and Eleanor O'Donovan

Bryce Holland, who helps in the preschool and the office twice a week

We appreciate your hard work and dedication!!



On February 12, 2011, her Excellency, Sharon Johnston, visited the Child Development Centre to see what kind of work we do here at the CDC. Below is an excerpt from a letter Sharon sent us afterward.

"I want to thank you for warmly welcoming me to the Child Development Centre during my recent visit to Whitehorse. I very much enjoyed learning about the important work being done at the Centre. The professionalism of your staff and the range and quality of facilities are most impressive. It was also a delight to meet with a number of the children who attend—please send a special hello on my behalf to Lucy, Kirsten, and Syllas. They are truly fortunate to have the support and encouragement of your employees and the

Thank You!

Thank you to all the organizations that made a donation towards the purchase of our new bus!

Variety Children's Charity

Skookum Asphalt

Grey Mountain Lion's Club

Elks Lodge

Rotary Club of Whitehorse

Northern Windows

Pelly Construction

Super Save Propane

Sanchez Cantina

Pine Medical

Employees and Management of Yukon Electrical Company Ltd



Darrell Stone (Skookum Asphalt), Alayne Squair (Child Development Centre) Photography: archbould.com

And thank you to the sponsors of the Child Development Centre Raffle
Yukon Yamaha Eric's Audiotronic Dana Klock, Remax

All proceeds went toward the purchase of our new bus.

And last but not least, thank you to all those who supported the raffle – all the organizers, sellers, buyers, and venues that enabled us to make this raffle a great success.

Thank you!!