

# Child Development Centre

OCTOBER 2010



## From My Window...



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### Greetings from Alayne

Welcome back to all our families! We hope everyone got a chance to enjoy our beautiful Yukon summer. Here at the Child Development Centre we have been busy! We are starting out the year with over 600 children in Whitehorse and the rural communities. We are fully staffed and program assistants are starting in the communities of Watson Lake, Dawson City, Carmacks, Faro, Carcross, Pelly Crossing, and Haines Junction. Here in Whitehorse, our Integrated Therapeutic Preschool is up and running and it is great to see the hustle and bustle of kids coming in and out of the building. We also have a language group – Chatter Bugs – running for this block of therapy. Several staff were asked to present at the 2010 FASD Symposium: Walking together in September - and got a terrific response from participants.

The board and staff are planning to update our strategic plan this year and hope to involve parents and childcare centers in the process. Thank you to all the parents who were able to fill out our parent survey in May and June. We are in the

process of putting all the information into one document and plan to share the results with staff this month. You don't have to wait for a survey if you have any comments or ideas; feel free to drop in or drop us a note at [info@cdc yukon.ca](mailto:info@cdc yukon.ca).

We are also in the process of trying to replace our van with a wheel chair bus and thanks to Variety's Children Charity in BC, we are half way there. Skookum Asphalt made a large donation directly to Variety and are pleased to see the money coming back to the Yukon. A big thank you to the service clubs and businesses that have made a donation to help us out. We are also going to be having a raffle to raise money for the Centre. If you think you could sell a book or two of tickets please drop in the front office and talk to Jenny. Thank you in advance for all your support.

Well that's it for now....stop by anytime if you have any questions.

~Alayne~

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## Comings & Goings



It is another year and like many years, we have changes at the Child Development Centre. Irene Szabla has permanently moved to the Department of Education and though we miss her, we are happy to continue to work with her in her new position as Manager of Special Programs. Rosemary Plaskett retired after 17 years with the Child

Development Centre! She will also be missed. We also said goodbye to Donna Rowland, Lori Sims, and Michelle Massie. We welcomed Andrea Mainer to the role of FASD Diagnostic Coordinator. Cat O'Donovan and Barb Hanson moved into permanent positions this year. Congratulations to Jenny Hierlihy, our Administrative Assistant,

on the birth of a baby boy this summer. Dad is staying home this time around so Jenny is already back with us.



## The Bookmark

### What's new at the CDC Library?

Thanks to a generous donation by the Rendezvous Rotary Club, we have some great new books in our library – for parents and kids! Here are just a few:

#### For Parents

- 101 Activities for Kids and Tight Spaces
- Attached at the Heart
- Beyond Baby Talk
- Einstein Never Used Flash Cards
- Games to Play with Babies
- Infant Massage
- Parenting from the Inside Out
- Sleeping Through the Night
- Teaching with the Brain in Mind
- The Smart Step Family

#### For Kids

- All About my Brother
- At the Beach
- Big and Little
- Bunny Cakes
- Froggy Goes to Bed
- Going Outside
- Gruffalo
- Here Comes the Bus
- How are you Feeling?
- Once Upon a Potty

Our library is located on the first floor just down the hall from the main office. If you find some books you are interested in, just bring them back down the hall and sign them out with Jenny.

## From the Mouths of Kids

While discussing preschool one day, one of the children told his mom that snack at CDC is SO good because they sprinkle salt AND sugar over the food. His attempts to convince his mother to sprinkle sugar over his food at home were unsuccessful!

While doing an assessment with a child, Leona, the psychologist, asked the question "This is a person in a hospital and you visit them when you are sick. Who is it?"

Child's answer: "Jesus"



## Parent Story

My name is Claire and my daughter was born different. We didn't realize how different until later. The first big hurdle we had was an emergency medivac to Edmonton and I was not able to accompany my little girl. Edera was found to be healthy but unable to suck. We were sent home with a feeding tube and a kangaroo pump for feeding. I pumped and did my best to get what I thought she needed.

Finally one day

when she had pulled out her feeding tube I said I had enough. We got her on a special bottle and she started the learning there. Since then she had several other obstacles in development.

When we would go to visit the doctors all anyone would focus on was: why did I take her feeding tube out; how was her weight; was she crawling; was she walking; and on and on. I always left feeling like everyone was against me. When we came to visit the Child

Development Center, I always felt like I had a team that was rooting for Edera and for her to succeed no matter when that was. They came to her daycare three days a week and worked with her one on one. I saw so much change in her. She was happy and loved showing off all the new little things they showed her. She started walking when she was 21 months old. We are still facing a lot more obstacles and look forward to facing them with the wonderful people at CDC.



# The Morning Rush

By Debra Kapaniuk, Developmental Therapist



At this time of year I often hear parents expressing frustration that they just can't seem to get out the door on time each morning. The lazy days of summer have ended and now we are faced with all the deadlines that come with fall – daycare drop-offs, school drop-offs, appointments, work, etc. Most parents share with me that once they are in the vehicle they know they are in the home stretch. It is getting ready to leave and walking out the door that determines if they will have a smooth or a rough morning. So here are some tricks and tips that have helped many families get through their morning routine with smiles on their faces.

**Daily routine** – Try and follow the same routine each day. For example, in my home it is breakfast, get dressed, brush teeth and hair, playtime (so I can get ready), coats on, grab backpacks and out the door. Give your self enough time to get all of these things done. Remember that with the addition of snowsuits you may need to start the routine a bit earlier. To help your children learn the steps of the routine, talk them about it by using phrases like “First we..., then we..., next we...”

**Organization** – Have labeled coat hooks and baskets for each child. Encourage your children to hang up their coat each time they take it off and put their mittens and hats in their baskets so that they can easily be found. Try to have them put their shoes or boots in the same place each day as well. If your child uses a backpack, have a special place or hook for it that it goes on as soon as they come in the house. This helps with the dreaded “I can't find my mitten!” in the morning. Some parents find it helpful to check that everything is where it belongs the night before so that if something is missing it can be found before the rush of the morning.

**Preparation** – If you have to prepare lunches, think about getting them made the night before so that your attention can be directed at getting everyone dressed and ready for their day. It is much easier to grab lunch packs from the fridge to put in backpacks than to make the lunch from scratch each morning; especially if you have more than one lunch to make.

**When trouble arises**, take the time to attend to it directly. Focusing on feelings can help your child move from the point of frustration to

feeling calm. For instance, if your child can't get the zipper done up on his snowsuit, say to him “You are frustrated because you can't get your zipper done up. I will help you. First we... then we... and then... and look, it's done! Great job!” Break the task down to little steps. If necessary, do hand-over-hand to help your child learn the skill. Gradually move to giving help with your words and celebrate their success. It may take a bit longer, but in the end helps your child to get ready more independently.

Remember that it may take a few weeks to get a new routine to work smoothly. As you stick with it you will find your children (from toddlers to teens!) becoming more cooperative as they start to follow the routine with more independence. Taking the extra time to create a predictable morning routine will help everyone in your home have a good start to their day!



# Research Ramblings—Can I Spoil My Baby?

By Leona Cornière, Registered Psychologist

A question I often hear from parents or caregivers is, "If I pick my baby up when she cries, will I spoil her?" Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, as well as many other references I checked, all agreed that it is not possible to spoil a child in the first year of life. However, this myth continues to exist even though we now know that babies can't be spoiled. The current research tells us that responding to an infant's needs actually helps to create children who are emotionally secure and independent.

## What is the origin of this myth?

It is thought that the myth about spoiling your child began in the 1920's, when experts began telling parents that they should not pick up their babies while they were crying. These experts thought that if parents responded to their babies when they cried, the infants would become clingy and dependent. Unfortunately, there was no scientific evidence to back up this belief and more recent research has shown it to be inaccurate. In spite of these new findings, the spoiling myth continues to be passed down from generation to generation resulting in misinformation and

inappropriate practices.

## What does the research tell us about responding to an infant who is crying?

When infants cry, they are telling us something. They may be hungry, wet, sick, or just want to be near their parent or caregiver. Crying is a way of communicating wants and needs. For example, when a parent or caregiver consistently responds to a crying baby in a supportive way, the baby feels safe and secure. The parent and child subsequently develop a loving, trustful relationship. This connection is especially important during the first year of life. Subsequently, as this child grows older, she:

- feels emotionally secure
- learns to calm herself
- begins to trust herself
- separates from parents with more ease
- builds self confidence and is more likely to feel comfortable trying new things
- seeks out parents or caregivers when in need of support and guidance

These interactions help to strengthen the parent-child

attachment, a life-long emotional connection. This connection helps children grow into independent individuals.



Parents should not feel obliged to follow well-intentioned advice from people who still believe in the spoiling myth. Responding to a crying baby and reassuring her that she will be cared for and loved will help her learn how to manage her world. Parents should also know that there are local supports available to help guide them when they are learning to connect with their new baby or child. For further information, please call the Child Development Centre at 456-8182.

Brazelton, T. B. (1992). *Touchpoints birth to 3: Your child's emotional and behavioral development*. New York: Perseus Publishing.

DYG Inc. (2000). *What grown-ups understand about child development: A national benchmark survey*: Civitas Initiative, Zero To Three, BRIO Corporation.

Sears, W., & Sears, M. (1993). *The baby book: Everything you need to know about your baby—from birth to age two (1st ed.)*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

# Outreach Team Fall Travel Schedule

## November

9	Teslin
16-18	Faro & Ross River
17	Carcross
22-24	Dawson City
24	Carmacks
25	Haines Junction
29- Dec 2	Watson Lake

## December

6-8	Old Crow
7-9	Pelly Crossing



# Team Updates

## Kwanlin Dun

It has been an exciting summer at the Dusk'a Headstart and Family Learning Centre at Kwanlin Dun. The Centre was closed for the summer while work crews painted, dug, and renovated the building. At the end of August a group of smiling children came back, excited to see the changes. The children have been busy watching squirrels in the bush, learning new songs, and learning about their clans.

A significant philosophical shift has occurred and Dusk'a now falls under the direction of Art Stephenson, Director of Education for the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, instead of within the Health Department. We are excited to be working with the new management team of Nora and Shawna. Both new and returning staff members at Dusk'a are excited to see the changes.

The Child Development Centre team at Kwanlin Dun has many familiar faces. Marguerite, Rachel, Barb, Kyla, Christel, Leona and Amy are all returning from last year. We welcome Joseph Graham who will be doing a practicum in counselling psychology under the direction of our psychologist, Leona Cornière.

## Beaver Creek, Destruction Bay & Burwash Landing

Twice a year two CDC staff members climb into the Envoy and head down the long and bumpy, yet very scenic, road to Destruction Bay, Burwash Landing, and Beaver Creek. Like in all Yukon communities, we provide support to the four year old kindergarten program (K4) in Destruction Bay and Beaver Creek. This year we are particularly excited about the new K4 program in Beaver Creek. The schools in both communities are combined to include all ages, with only one teacher. Both classes are very busy, with active kids both indoors and out. The teachers are enjoying the experience, and have welcomed CDC into their class with open arms. Besides the K4 programs, the families in these communities also access our services and the Follow Along program through home visits and health centre visits.

There have been several new babies born into all three communities in the past year, and everyone knows...we LOVE to snuggle babies. The program is continually growing, and we look forward to our visit in the spring.

## Staff Spotlight...Alayne Squair



Alayne followed the typical Yukon story – move up for a few years, work, and then go back home. Well that was 18 years ago and now the Yukon feels like her home. Since coming to the north she has worked at the Child Development Centre as a Speech-Language Pathologist, Program Coordinator and now as the Executive Director. For the first

two years she worked on the Outreach team. Back then there were only 3 or 4 people who did all the traveling, so not only did they get to know each other well they got to know the communities well. In the last 18 years, Alayne has gotten married, had three great kids (Jack, Landyn, and Olivia) and lots of pets, all of which keep her very busy. When asked

about staying at the Child Development Centre for so long, the answer is always the same: it's all about the kids and the people you get to work with.

## Staff Spotlight...Andrea Mainer



Andrea joined the CDC team in August as the Coordinator of the FASD Diagnostic and Support Team. Andrea has worked as a Registered Nurse and has been fortunate over the years to work in a variety of health related positions for diverse organizations in the Yukon. A common philosophy in all her work places has been the importance of client and family centered services, and ensuring that

programs meet the health needs of individuals living in the North. Andrea was born in Peterborough, Ontario, and her path to the Yukon included stops in Northern Ontario, Northern British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories; however, the Yukon has been home for Andrea since 1982, and she's happy to be raising her teenage son here. Andrea is looking forward to her time at CDC working with the FASD team to

facilitate early diagnosis and intervention for children and families living with FASD.

## Mission Statement

*In collaboration with Families and Community members, we provide early supports and service to Yukon children from birth to school age, particularly those whose needs are special.*



As a member of the Child Development Centre Society, you help bring services to children with special needs.

**Thank you for taking the time to send your \$10.00 membership fee to:**

**Child Development Centre  
PO Box 2703  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6  
Phone: (867) 456-8182**

### **Child Development Centre Membership Registration**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\$10.00 enclosed**

**A tax deductible receipt will be issued for memberships.**

**Thank you.**