



Child Development Centre

WINTER 2012

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From My Window

This month we've gone from ice fog to melting snow! But, despite the unpredictable weather, we are plugging along with groups, home visits, and visits to the communities - though some of our trips were cancelled due to chilling temperatures. We are into our third block of therapy and have two groups and a parent group running in addition to our usual programs. Staff participated in a day of learning about Trauma Informed Practice with a focus on historical trauma in the Yukon with Jackie MacLaren. Part of the day was spent talk-

ing about our services and how they fit with what we learned. At the board level we are working on some of the goals identified in our Strategic Plan - specifically developing new board governance policies. A reminder to everyone we are closed from March 5 - 9th for spring break. We are happy to announce we are getting new carpets in some areas of the building while we are closed so things may be in a bit of a mess when we re-open. Thank you to Yukon Government's Property Management for this much-needed renovation. That's it for now....enjoy the spring-like weather!

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LET'S GO PAPERLESS!!

Sign up for an electronic copy of our newsletter! Check out our website at www.cdcyukon.com and sign up on the homepage. It's easy!

In addition, our website has many helpful handouts and links you may find interesting.

Check it out today!



The Book Mark

Going to Kindergarten

If you have a little one entering kindergarten this fall, you may be interested in the following books about going to school:

- Welcome to Kindergarten
- Tiptoe into Kindergarten
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- The Night Before Kindergarten
- Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come!

HELP WANTED:

We're looking for any parent or caregiver to do a short book review for our next newsletter this spring. If you are interested in sharing your views on a book, please let Jenny in the front office know. We're looking for approximately 500-800 words.

Happy Reading!

Celebrate Education Week With Us!

Join us in our library for an open house on **Tuesday, April 17 from 10am – noon** for coffee, tea, and snacks. We have books for children and adults. Come check it out!

From the Mouths of Kids

It's bedtime one night and a parent goes to lie down with their child until she falls asleep, as they have for the past six years. Finally the little girl says "This might be sad for you but you can go now." All those years the child had followed this bedtime ritual for her parents!

While completing an assessment with a child, I asked him "What are the four seasons of the years?" He responded, "Fall, winter, summer, then winter again." I thought that sounded just like the four seasons of the Yukon.

Welcome to Holland

When you're going to have a baby, it's like you're planning a vacation in Italy. You're all excited. You get a whole bunch of guidebooks, you learn a few phrases in Italian so you can get around, and then it comes time to pack your bags and head for the airport – for Italy.

Only when you land, the stewardess says, "Welcome to Holland." You look at one another in disbelief and shock, saying, "Holland? What are you talking about? I signed up for Italy."

But they explain there's been a change of plans and you've landed in Holland, and there you must stay. "But I don't know anything about Holland! I don't want to stay!" you say.

But you stay. You go out and buy some new guidebooks, you learn some new phrases, and you meet people you never knew existed. The important thing is that you are not in a filthy, plague-infested slum full of pestilence and famine. You are simply in a different place that you had planned. It's slower paced than Italy, less flashy than Italy, but after you've been there a little while and you have a chance to catch your breath, you begin to discover that Holland has windmills. Holland has tulips. Holland has Rembrandts.

But everyone else you know is busy coming and going from Italy. They're all bragging about what a great time they had there and for the rest of your life, you will say, "Yes, that's what I had planned."

The pain of that will never, ever go away. You have to accept that pain, because the loss of that dream, the loss of that plan, is a very, very significant loss. But if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you will never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things, about Holland.

By Emily Perl Kingsley

"Holland?
What are you
talking about?
I signed up for
Italy!"

Late Talkers Program

By Carole Kroening, Speech Language Pathologist

Target Word © – a Hanen Program© for Parents of Children who are Late Talkers

What is it?

From January – March this year, a Target Word© group is taking place at Child Development Centre. This is a program for the parents of children who are late talkers. Carole Kroening, SLP, is offering the program at 2 different times in order to meet the varying schedules of today's busy families: Tuesday evenings or Wednesday noon hours. Parents come to 5 sessions, 2 hours long, with other parents where they learn strategies to create language learning opportunities for their children, and they learn how to select 'Target Words' specifically for their child. The parents also have 3 individual videotaping and feedback sessions with Carole and their child where they practice using the new strategies and suggestions are made to help adjust and fine tune the strategies to their child.

Why be concerned about Late Talkers?

A child is considered to be a late talker if he or she:

- is between 18 – 20 months and has an expressive vocabulary of fewer than 24 words
- is between 21 – 24 months and has an expressive vocabulary of fewer than 40 words
- is between 24 – 30 months and has an expressive vocabulary of fewer than 100 words
- is between 24 – 30 months and has no two-word combinations

Those are the outside limits of typical. Typically, two year olds say between 50 – 200 single words, and often speak in two-word phrases. When they don't, what should we do? Should we 'wait and see' or should we do something?

Research shows that about 50% of late talking two year olds seem to 'catch up' by age 3 if we just 'wait and see', but 50% won't 'catch up' on their own. Kids in this second group are talking less as 3, 4, and 5-year-olds, and children from the first group that appeared to have 'caught up' are also more likely to have language and academic difficulties related to reading and writing that show up in the intermediate grades and high school.

How do we know which group your child is likely to be in? There are a number of other fac-

tors such as recurrent ear infections, family history of learning disabilities, having been a very quiet baby, or a limited number of speech sounds that increase the likelihood of language delay. But, we can't know for sure. What we do know is that doing something now increases the possibility that they will 'catch up'. A 2-year-olds brain is programmed for learning language at this age; there is more 'neuroplasticity' so, it is easier now to help them build their language learning capacity than it will be later. What might take 6 months of language therapy now might take 2 years of language therapy later.

Parents are the best people to stimulate their 2-year-old's language, to help them learn to say more single words, and to help them use more phrases and word combinations. Parents know their child's interests, likes, and dislikes. Parents have more chances to interact with their child and in more different situations than a speech language pathologist ever will; therefore, our therapy approach is to help the parents learn the best strategies to use, not to try and provide direct language therapy to the child only from the Speech Language Pathologist.

Making Sense of Your Child

By Anne-Marie DaSilva, Occupational Therapist

“Ouch! You’re pulling my hair! Not these socks! These pants are too tight! My socks got wet and I need to change them!” It’s a busy morning and you are desperately trying to get out the door, drop the kids off at their child care centre, and make it to work on time. You just don’t have time to deal with your child’s discomforts. It’s time to go....Believe it or not your kids are truly not trying to make your life difficult. Those sensory experiences can be uncomfortable for them and need to be taken care of if you want to get out the door in a better frame of mind.

Sensory processing is different for everyone, even adults. Some children are sensitive to touch. Things that bother sensitive children can be painful, distracting, irritating, and downright uncomfortable for them. Although we may not understand it, their experience is very real for them. Luckily, there are some things that can be tried to make life more manageable for you and your little one.

Stress and anxiety can make things worse. Do you ever notice how an hour seems to disappear faster in

the morning than any other time of day? If possible, try reducing the general hustle and bustle so it is more relaxing for everyone. For example, try to make the lunches the night before, wake up a few minutes earlier to allow more time in the morning, maybe turn the radio on if your child enjoys music, or off if it seems too distracting.

Firm or deep touch can be calming for your child. A firm hug, massage down the arms and legs, or heavy work can help make getting dressed, brushing teeth, getting hair done, or eating breakfast easier. Heavy work for a child could be doing a push up on a chair (as pictured on the right) or clasping hands together and squeezing a few times.

So what about the pickiness around clothes? Turn socks inside out to avoid seams. Cut tags off from shirts and dresses. Next time you are buying clothes, consider buying them to fit a little looser and avoid potential scratchy clothing, no matter how cute they are! If he or she is old enough, take your child along to help choose an outfit.

The Out-of-Sync Child and *The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun* by Carol Stock Kranowitz are easy-to-read books for more information and ideas.



Also, check out the link below to learn more about other potential sensory challenges.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNEXf7MA884>

Outreach Schedule

February

9 Carmacks
 14 Teslin
 16 Haines Junction
 21-23 Mayo & Pelly Crossing
 21-23 Old Crow
 29 Carcross

March

19-22 Watson Lake
 21 Carmacks
 22 Haines Junction
 26-28 Dawson City
 27-29 Faro & Ross River

April

3 Teslin
 4 Carcross



Team Update

Haines Junction

Every month, Rosanne, speech language pathologist, Claire, developmental therapist, and Maryève, occupational therapist, head over to spend a day in Haines Junction as part of the Child Development Centre's community visits. During this trip, we work along with the K-4 kids and wonderful staff at St. Elias



School. Monica, the teacher, Margaret, the principal, and Cathy, an early childhood therapy assistant, are always helpful and ready to meet with us. We meet children and their families in their homes and also spend quite some time with our friends at Shawkwunlee Daycare where Janina, the director, always greets us with open arms. Since we try to find a time and location for our appointments that's as convenient as possible, the Haines Junction Health Centre offers us a

space to use. We are very excited to start the luncheon information sessions this month with new mothers in the community. As much as we love meeting the community in Haines Junction, the drive there and back is also pleasant as we have the opportunity to view the vast and spectacular wilderness landscape this region has to offer. We always look forward to our visits in Haines Junction.

Staff Spotlight...Marguerite Kuiack

Our family was recently involved in the Energy Diet Challenge through Canadian Geographic and Shell Canada. One of the unexpected outcomes of this was that it really helped to put our family back in balance. Twenty-six years ago when we started raising kids, we were very dedicated to making sure they understood the principals behind caring for the environment and developed values around conservation and social responsibility. I taught environmental education in a series of programs for children and youth, we minimized our purchases, made everything from scratch (even ketchup), and lived with a single vehicle (when it was working).

As we became more established as a family, accumulated more, got busier and more tired as parents, it became easier and easier to let things slip. The speedometer on the vehicles climbed when we drove the kids to their various activities, convenience food became part of the menu plan, and the environmental education became an exercise of simply recycling and composting (sadly, putting the compost in the bins and not even turning it over). That's not to say we weren't still doing some good things, but we certainly weren't doing all we could, nor were we taking the time to think through some of the things we

could to reduce our carbon footprint.

"The Energy Diet Challenge" forced us once again to look at what we valued, and what we wanted that to look like for our daughters.

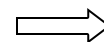
The Program was set up to have us look at all aspects of our energy conservation including lighting, heating, transportation, water use, food choices and cooking, and waste management.

We began the Challenge by giving the Sponsors a baseline in these areas based on consumption practices from previous years and a recent baseline from this past summer. Starting in September right up to mid December we tracked and monitored, scrounged and modified in every possible way in order to reduce as much as we could. We had a couple of additional challenges to our reduction including that our baseline was already low in a few of the areas so further reduction would be difficult in a family of four. Living in the North, while the rest of the country was still experiencing more favorable weather conditions, would affect our gas mileage and wood consumption and living at Marsh Lake provided few options around transportation.

We received a lot of community support through the media, our

work places, the organizations we are involved with, and the schools our girls attend. People offered lots of suggestions and we tried pretty much all of them. Here are some of the things we feel made a difference.

- Monitored our mileage and discovered that a lot of extra fuel was consumed around town picking up kids from school and dropping them off. We now have them take a bus directly to their activity or to our workplace and then we go from there.
- Driving more fuel-efficiently. Thanks to Simone, our teenage daughter who ranked well in the driver challenge in Toronto, we've learned a lot from her.
- Moved our freezer outside for the winter months.
- Learned more about "phantom power" and shut off all our power bars at night and when we weren't home during the day.
- We switched all our bulbs to CFL (compact fluorescents/spirals) and then continued to go even more efficient so that now most of them are LED (light emitting diode/the new generation of energy efficient lighting). This is an expensive switch over so we are doing it gradually.



Staff Spotlight...Marguerite Kuiack cont'd

- Reduced our showers to under 10L by installing a low-flow shower head and installing a shut-off valve on the shower head in order to turn it off when we were soaping up.
- Minimizing our laundry by designating a shower towel and using it more than once. This goes for clothes as well.
- We never owned a dryer so the clothes drying was an easy solution for us as dryers are known to take up to a third of one's energy bill.
- Keeping our meals very simple and cooking enough at one time for lunch leftovers the next day.
- Using our left over cooking water to hydrate the dog's food.
- Evaluating our need and turning off the hot tub for the winter months.

Anyway, the list could go on. The main thing is that with all the suggestions, support, and ideas we recognize that any number of families in our community could have been equally as successful in doing this challenge. We were just lucky enough to be one of the families from across Canada that was chosen.

In order to win the Challenge we were scored in several different areas including amount of reduction, innovative ideas, creativity in presentation of the materials and blogs, video content and creativity, and engaging the public to name a few. We were also given weekly challenges that were in addition to our efforts to reduce energy. This included things like engaging the community in our transportation efforts, family evenings without power, building a solar oven and cooking on it (in November). The expectation was to document all of this through blogs and videos. I believe that the videos which were created by our daughter Simone, who is in grade 12, was a big part of why we were able to successfully win the challenge. The content of those videos are now being used across Canada to support a nationwide school-based challenge. We've been told that they are a

novel way to present the ideas. If you're interested you can check them out at this website:

www.energydietchallenge.canadiangeographic.ca . If you do look at the website, you may want to start with the one on solar cooking as it was one of the biggest challenges in the darkest time of year and during that week it was -35°C.

In the three months of the challenge we saved an average of \$45/month on our power bill and we reduced our gas mileage to a little more than a half! (In June we were spending \$900/month on gas coming from Marsh Lake). The reduction in our transportation was certainly the biggest challenge of all and it still is but now that we've established these new patterns it's easy to keep it going. The learning experience and opportunity for our family to work together on such an amazing project with the support of these two Canadian institutions, Shell Canada and Canadian Geographic, was an unexpected gift that took us through 2011. One never knows what opportunities and challenges the new year holds for a family!

