



# CDC Brouhaha

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Fall 2011

Child Development Centre Society of Fort St. John and District

This issue of the Newsletter is dedicated to Mary Czerwinski in celebration of her recent retirement from the CDC



We are a CARF accredited centre

I started my career in Early Childhood Education at ABC Daycare in Fort St. John in 1979 where I spent one year. I decided it was time to make a change and applied at the Fort. St. John Friendship Centre in 1980 and was hired in the preschool program as a teacher. In 1985, I moved into the position of supervisor until 1988. I enjoyed my eight years at the centre and have fond memories of all the children. My next step on my education journey was accepting a position at Taylor Elementary School in 1988. I was hired as an aide under the supervision and direction of the Learning Assistant Teacher. I worked with children from Kindergarten to Grade Seven. My duties included assisting in the classroom, working with children in small groups and individually. I provided support for children that needed extra help with their reading, math, social studies and writing skills. I also provided speech therapy and physiotherapy under the guidance and direction of the Speech Pathologist and Physiotherapist. I remained in this position until 1993. In the fall of 1994 I was asked to provide a Preschool program for the District of Taylor. I ran the program for a year as well as some substituting at Oscare. When I saw a job posting for the Child Development Centre I applied and was thrilled to be hired. I chose the Child Development Centre because I had heard many great things about the services they provided for children and their families. It was also my goal to become part of this amazing team.

Since I was small I have always had a strong desire to work with young children in some capacity. I chose Early Childhood Education because I believed in early intervention and found it to be a very rewarding job and loved to be around all of the children. The greatest reward for me as an Early Childhood Educator was seeing how the children grew and their accomplishments. It was the most amazing thing to see how much a child can improve or what they can accomplish over a year and to know I had a hand in that. It made all the challenges worthwhile.

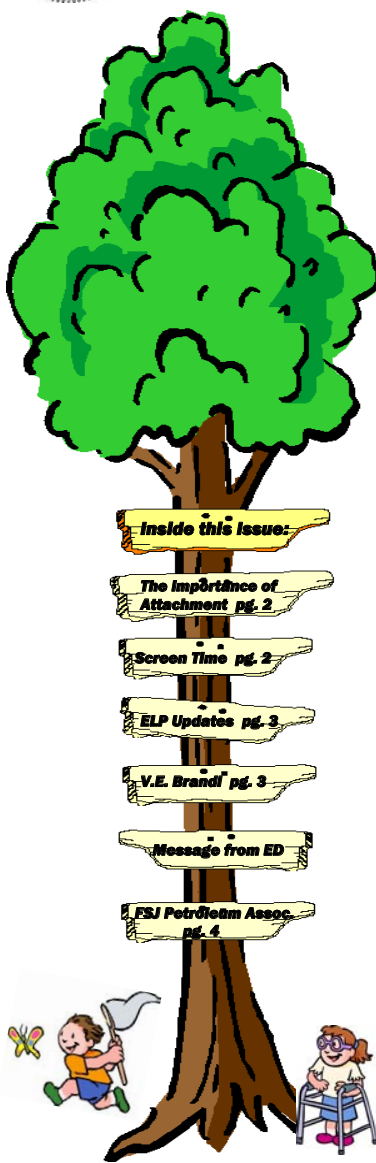
A few of my fondest memories were engaging in play with a non verbal child who had little eye contact and seeing him stop and smile and knowing you have made a connection. You continue to follow his lead and he laughs. It's wonderful...

Another child doing a science experiment and he's trying so hard, you can see his frustration is growing. Then he curls his tongue and gives it one more attempt and it works. His face brightens and he says, "look I did it!"

One day I was playing in the dramatic corner with a few children and we were getting dressed for a trip to the store. One little girl brought me a red dress with frills and said, "wear this one Mary." So I struggled a bit and put it on and we pretended to go shopping. Each day when that child was playing in the house corner she would call me over to put on my red dress.

During a group activity we were discussing what kinds of clothes to wear in the winter. I had a little suitcase with a variety of clothing items. I reached one out and put it on. I would be a little silly and put on a bathing suit. They would laugh and respond, "you can't wear that in the winter!" So I would take it off and try something else until I was dressed in my snow pants, boots, hat, mitts and scarf.

Mary dedicated over 30 years to the early childhood field and all of us here at the Child Development Centre feel blessed to have had the opportunity to work with Mary for so many years. We wish her great happiness and enjoyment in her retirement. Her dedication to children and their families is a testament to her commitment to our community. Thank you Mary!



## Infant Development Program –The Importance of Attachment

All babies need attention, comfort, and a feeling of safety. Babies who feel scared will turn to their caregiver for protection and comfort; over time, how the caregiver helps the baby will mold the relationship into a pattern of interaction.

[Bowlby's attachment theory](#) describes the importance of the early relationship that develops between the infant and the primary caregiver. Research shows that a healthy attachment is a protective factor that leads to the best developmental outcomes. Children that haven't had a healthy attachment relationship are more likely to have social and emotional problems and have difficulty with school. In addition, attachment relationships continue to influence thoughts, feelings, motives, and close relationships throughout life.

### How to create and maintain a healthy attachment relationship with your child:

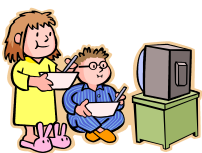
- Comfort your infant or child when they are hurt, sick, frightened or distressed, by holding them and speaking softly to help them calm down.
- Notice and take delight in your young child's play, and imitate what they are doing.
- Take a few minutes to hold your baby in your arms and "talk" and interact with him/her.
- Become a good detective when it comes to your child, reading cues such as body language. This will help you determine what their needs may be. For example: Pay attention to any signs of fatigue to be sure your child is getting enough rest.



For more information and resources on attachment, contact the Infant Development Program or visit [www.child-encylopedia.com](http://www.child-encylopedia.com). Information for this article was taken from the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development & the Northern Attachment Network brochure.

## The Negative Impact of Screen Time on Babies and Toddlers

There has been an increase in screen technology use (televisions, Computers, ipads, iphones, cell phones, etc.) with children and infants to educate and entertain. However research shows that these technologies do more harm than good. Too much screen time is linked to problems with attention and learning, aggressive behaviors, obesity, poor sleep and developmental delays in gross motor, fine motor and speech and language development (American Academy of Pediatrics; Canadian Pediatric Society; Jennings J 2005; Kershaw P 2009).



The early exposure to technology or too much technology can alter a child's brain and affect its ability to properly develop. It is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (2004) and Canadian pediatric Society (2010) that children **0-2 years should not be exposed to ANY technology**, even passively (this means no devices turned on while eating, playing, or just hanging around the house). While children ages **2-5 years** should not use more than 1 hour of technology per day (this includes educational technology).

### What to do...

- Turn the TV off while home during the day
- No technology in the Bedroom (you have no control over amount of exposure if it is in their bedroom)
- Unplug yourself- you can't play with or talk to your children if you are connected to the TV, or your smart phone/computer.
- Participate in play with your baby/children, move with them, provide them with touch, connect to them through eye contact.



### For more information about technology and children please see:



Tips for limiting screen time from the Canadian pediatric society: <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/behaviourparenting/LimitingScreenTime.htm>

American Academy of Pediatrics: <http://www.aap.org/>

Zone In: <http://www.zonein.ca/index.html> and the Zone in Fact Sheet <http://www.zoneinworkshops.com/fact-sheet/zonein-fact-sheet/>

Campaign for commercial free childhood: <http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/>

## Early Learning Program



### Treafort -

This year we had the parents complete a form “in a million words or less tell us about your child”, upon returning the form the child’s name would go into a draw for a cookbook. We have received more than half of them back. The winners of the draw were: Monday Wednesday Friday morning – **Taya Hunt** received the “the Toddler Cookbook”, Monday Wednesday Friday Afternoon - **Linkin Mueller** received “the Shrek cookbook”, Tuesday & Thursday Morning - **Charlie Ramsey** received “Make your own popsicles” and Tuesday & Thursday afternoon – **Jaxson Clarke** receive “ready steady Spaghetti”



### Sunflower -

Congratulations go out to the following children and their families for winning the cookbook draw. The families who filled out the “million words or less” sheet, giving us some extra information about their child, were entered into a draw to win a cookbook. Their form needed to be filled out by the end of September. The children who won the draw were: MWF AM – **Devin Gallant**, MWF PM – **Arianna Bodaly**, T TH AM – **Isabella Chaput**, T TH PM – **Mason Savage**.

Thanks goes out to Corinne Cressman for the donation of a kids work bench, with all the tools included! Another Thanks to the Bueckert for the new goldfish for our class room Also thanks to Shlya Troyer for donating art smocks to the sunflower room and Amber Lee for donating some child size aprons to the tree fort room

### Volunteers in ELP:

Cheyenne Attachie on Fridays AM in Sunflower PM in Tree fort

Mandy Semograd Mon, Wed, & Friday mornings Tree fort, Tues, Thurs mornings in Sunflower



Please support this Early Learning Program Parent Advisory Committee Fundraiser.

Visit [www.cdcelp.mabel.ca](http://www.cdcelp.mabel.ca) Special seasonal items are available.

The date to place your order has been extended to December 31, 2011.



**Did you know?** When using our handy coupon, 5% of your purchase when you shop at our local M&M store will directly benefit the CDC Early Learning Program. If you don’t already have one, be sure to request your coupon sheet today!

In partnership with the City of Fort St. John and the Northern Environmental Action Team, the CDC is participating in the Idle-Less Program. We would like to remind all of our families that idling within City Limits is discouraged. Idling not only wastes gas, but also contributes to greenhouse gasses to the atmosphere. Clean air is everyone’s responsibility and we hope you support us in this endeavour.



If everyone in Canada reduced idling by 3 minutes each day we could collectively save millions of dollars in fuel and tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. **Some things to keep in mind:**

- Idling for more than 10 seconds uses more gas than restarting your vehicle.
- Vehicle exhaust contains particular matter that once inhaled can lodge deep in lung tissue leading to asthma and other respiratory issues.
- The average Canadian motorist idles for 8 minutes each day.
- Children are more vulnerable to air pollution as they breathe faster than adults and inhale 50% more air per pound of body weight than adults.

If everyone idles less, we can breathe easier.

For more information contact NEAT at 250-785-6328

## V.E. Brandl \$10,000.00!



*Penny Gagnon, Executive Director receives a generous donation of \$10,000.00 from Barry Brandl of V.E. Brandl for Project Build-A-Fort*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to report back to our community the results of our various feedback surveys. Every year we gather information from our stakeholders, which include families, staff, volunteers, and community partners, on how “we are doing” here at the CDC. The information you provide us allows for quality improvement planning for how we deliver services so I would like to thank all of you who have participated in this process. I would like to open this segment of the newsletter up with a tidbit of very interesting information. In 2002 the CDC had approximately 20 staff and served 280 children. Last year our centre employed 41 staff and we served 771 children. These numbers are remarkable to me as it indicates a growing and vibrant community that values children and their families. It also tells me that our services continue to be pressured and it is our responsibility to advocate for increased funding to serve our city to the best of our ability.

Over the past two years the CDC has seen a remarkable increase in demands for our services. Most notably in 2009 our speech therapy caseload was 110 and in 2011 it reached 189. As well occupational therapy caseload was 52 in 2009 and nearly doubled to 96 in 2011. Other services have seen significant increases in their demands as well.

Families and caregiver satisfaction is essential to our services. When we ask families for feedback we ask them questions in the areas of Enabling and Partnership, Coordinated and Comprehensive Care, and Respectful and Supportive Care. In all of these areas we have seen an increase in the level of satisfaction. Families and caregivers have told us we have a caring atmosphere, are looking at the whole needs of the child, and taking the time to talk with families respectfully within their own unique needs and circumstances.

The Early Learning Program (ELP) provides preschool to approximately 160 children annually and the feedback really assists the program in ensuring the children are learning in a rich and quality environment. Family satisfaction with the ELP program has been very consistent with a high level of satisfaction. Families reported to us that they have a good relationship with the teachers and staff and they feel informed of the program procedures, curriculum, and philosophy.

Unfortunately some families have to be on a waitlist due to program pressures, priorities, and not enough government funding to meet the community demographics. Most families reported they were contacted in a timely manner while on the waitlist and provided with information while waiting. Families have told us that they would like additional information while they are waiting for services and an indication of how long they will be waiting for services. This information will help us make improvements for families who are on our waitlist.

Community partners play an important role within the CDC. When we surveyed our community partners they told us that there has been an increase in awareness of our referral process however needed more information on the referral process for Supported Child Development. They also told us they were highly satisfied with our services.

Staff at the CDC are a precious resource. They provide the intervention, care, and skills that help our families. They also contribute to the wonderful culture and working environment we have at the CDC. Staff have told us that they are satisfied with their work at the CDC and reported a high level of satisfaction in the areas of feeling valued, respected, recognized for the work they do, supported, and having good relations with their colleagues.

I would like to thank all of our stakeholders for providing us feedback. The information we receive is so valuable as it allows us to always examine ways we can improve services and provide the most effective programs for children and families in our area. The full 2010/2011 Outcomes Report can be viewed on our website at [www.cdcfsj.ca](http://www.cdcfsj.ca).



Blaine Kitzul presented Penny Gagnon, CDC Executive Director with a donation of \$3500.00 from the Oilmen's Association Annual Family Fun Weekend. The Association hosted raffles, helicopter rides, river boating, quadding, and a duck race. A thank to Gerd Juister for his willingness of special generosity towards the CDC.



Want to know more about us or  
see our calendar of events?  
Visit our WEBSITE at:

[www.cdcfsj.ca](http://www.cdcfsj.ca)