

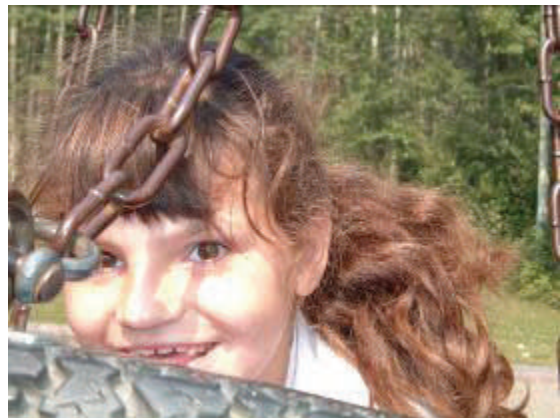


Project Build-A-Fort

**Giving Report
2007-2010**



More than a building . . .



Report Contents



From the President 3

Project Build-A-Fort 4

From the Executive Director 6

What we do 8

Family Ties 10

Generosity at work 12



From the President

On behalf of the staff and the board of directors of the Child Development Centre, I would like to thank you for your support in making Project Build-A-Fort a reality. It is through the tremendous support from you, our partners and friends, parents, volunteers, and the community that the Child Development Centre has grown from its humble beginnings in 1973 to a leader in early childhood development and children's services in our area. I would like to thank you, each one, for partnering with us.

The need for the services of the CDC continues to grow and be pressured with the birthrate in Fort St. John continuing to rise and access to our centre increasing annually. Approximately 700 children access CDC services each year, with some 150 of them waitlisted for service. The programs we offer at the Child Development Centre are essential services for children and youth in our community.

The planning for Project Build-A-Fort began in 2007 and is now complete. Through this project we have been able to expand our physical space by approximately 10,000 square feet which essentially has doubled the size of our building. Through this expansion, increased funding, and adequate staffing levels we can see more children and assist more families.

Families and parents of children with special needs want the reassurance that whatever their child faces as they grow and learn, help will be available to them. It is our goal at the CDC to support parents as their children navigate their own path of services and programs. We celebrate with families and children their challenges, heartbreaks, joys, and triumphs as their children sprint ahead.



Thank you for partnering with us and investing in children and families.



Project Build-A-Fort



This building expansion has a greater impact than the simple construction of a building. This project has included space for programs and services that will enrich the lives of children with special needs and the community as a whole. It will enable us to offer a broader range of programs, enhance service delivery, and allow us to better meet the needs of children and families in our area. We believe that through this project there will be an increase in the knowledge of and greater appreciation for children with special needs and as a result, a stronger support network will be built to ensure a person's success in the community.

When branding the project, we wanted to somehow represent our long standing roots and our foundation in the city of Fort St. John and incorporate that into our project name, thereby, ensuring that the community of Fort St. John realized that the CDC has appreciated their long standing support and patience in making our expansion a reality. Staff came together to brainstorm a name that would represent our community and the work they invest themselves in daily. Through this process, the name "Project Build-A-Fort" was born.

Highlights of Building/Renovation:

- Increase of approximately 10,000 sq/ft
- New community play space
- Gymnasium
- Created thirty-two new early learning spaces for the community

The name, "Build-A-Fort" recognizes and represents our community of Fort St. John. The name, "Fort" also signifies a place for a child to succeed and grow as the process of a child building a fort encompasses a child's imagination, their love of constructing, their joy of discovery, planning, working together with friends,

personal achievement, and success. It signifies the experience children currently have and will continue to have here at the Child Development Centre.

Project "Build-A-Fort" will have a great impact on our ability for future programs and services. Without the support of our partners, the Child Development Centre could not have achieved their purpose to continually grow as service providers, always looking for innovative and effective ways to serve the children and families that access our services.



Project Build-A-Fort con't



Top Ten Reasons for Expansion

1. To continue to evolve and grow as a leader in early intervention services in the north.
2. To enhance service delivery through a greater ability to offer new programs and services.
3. Increased early intervention therapy spaces.
4. Increased early learning spaces within our area.
5. To bring a full life skills centre to our area designed for children and youth with special needs.
6. Increased community programs such as a play centre for families with young children.
7. Increase education and awareness
8. Greater ability to attract and retain qualified therapy professionals to our area.
9. Increased ability to host specialized early childhood development, pediatric, psychology, hearing and vision clinics.



Project Build-A-Fort Team

Board of Directors

Shannon Stewart

Kelly Ballard

Christine Whitford

Dayna Ross

Jennifer Szoo

Darcy Wheeler

Angela Kosick

Lisa Pomeroy

Andy Ackerman

Dr. Moody

Executive Director

Penny Gagnon

Building Committee Chairperson

Dr. Glen Hamill

Architects

HIP Architects

Engineers

Urban Systems

Hemisphere Engineering

Project Manager

WL Construction



From the Executive Director

As Executive Director of the Child Development Centre, I have the privilege of witnessing the power of generosity. When I walk through the new doors of the CDC. I feel a sense of family, teamwork, and comfort all directing towards the growth, development, and health of children. I see the eyes of children filled with curiosity and wonder. I hear their voices of laughter and screeches of success and excitement. I do, however, see times of fear, sadness, and frustration. Parents are nervous but ambitious only wanting what is best for their children. Expecting and new parents come for information and support. While others come fearing the unknown, feeling something may not be “quite right” for their child and have a longing desire for help. There is no navigation system or map that direct the journey for a family with a child with special needs. There is no absolute or right answer as every situation is unique and warrants its own attention and focus.

I hear and see the 160 individual children who attend our early learning program throughout the week. I see them ambitiously working to explore their creative minds and tackle the challenges and joys of making new friends, learning new tasks, and for some being away from their parents for the very first time. As I pass through the hallways, I admire as children learn to express themselves and learn communication through our speech therapy program; possibly making new sounds, stringing words together, or even learning sign language. Next, I feel a sense of pride while I watch a child learn how to hold a crayon, a paint brush, or cut with a pair of scissors as they develop their own craft in occupational therapy. Through my years at the Child Development Centre, I have watched children born with severe motor impairments learn to crawl, stand, and eventually walk, as well as enjoy physiotherapy in our hydrotherapy pool. I could spend hours talking about the accomplishments of so many children I have personally witnessed – children with hearing impairments exploring the sounds of the world after receiving cochlear implants and other children with visual impairments learning to navigate through their senses of touch, taste, smell, and assistive tools.

Families and parents of children with special needs want the reassurance that whatever their child faces as they grow and learn, they will be available to them. It is our goal at the CDC to support parents as their children navigate their own path of services and programs.

We celebrate with families and children their challenges, heartbreaks, joys, and triumphs as their children sprint ahead.



Project Build-A-Fort enabled us to implement more programming for our families and the community. Your investment did not end in a structure, but began in the potential of each and every child and family that comes through our doors. For that, I say, ‘thank you.’



Child Development Centre Society of Fort St. John & District, *Project Build-A-Fort*

More than a building



The Child Development Society of Fort St. John and District serves approximately 700 children each year. Another 150 are waiting for at least one of our services.



What We Do

We offer Early Childhood Development and Support to children with special needs with a particular focus on children who are 0-5 years of age. Services can be provided individually or in groups.

Services provided are:

- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Infant Development Program
- Family Services
- Supported Child Development Program



We offer an Early Learning Program which is a learning enriched environment where all children with both typical and special needs have the opportunity to build foundational concepts in literacy, language development, and mathematical concepts through skills and structured activities.

We offer Respite and Skills Enhancement programs which provides activities for children with special needs that recognize the child's capacity and are designed to enhance the child's independence with respect to daily living activities and achievement of personal goals.

We have a Complex Developmental Behavior Disorder Intake/Key worker who provides support and service coordination to families with children and youth with FASD and other similar neurological conditions who are between the ages of 0-19 years of age.

Rotary Play Centre is a specially designed space with programming for children between the ages of zero to five and parent(s)/caregiver(s) to come and play and learn together. This is a free community program based off of the Strong Start Model with a special focus on toddlers 18—36 months.

Our centre has unique and special places to serve our clients:

- Snoezelen Room
- Hydrotherapy Pool
- Occupational Therapy Room
- Physiotherapy Room
- Speech and Language Therapy Room
- 2 Early Learning Classrooms
- Gymnasium





“Building the best foundation for our children’s future”



Family Ties

It was early in the year 2008 when we began to realize our youngest son, only 15 months at the time, was not responding to noise of any kind. Concerned, we went to see our family doctor and from there to the audiologist in Fort St John. Through a series of tests it was determined that our little Hunter was indeed profoundly deaf in both ears. We were immediately referred to the CDC here in Fort St John. Within only a few days, we were contacted by Deanne Kosick, the Infant Development Program Coordinator for the CDC. From that day forward, the most amazing group of people have become a weekly part of our lives. The first year with Hunter, the CDC worked very closely with us as we traveled between here and Vancouver, working with the Cochlear Implant Services at BC Children's Hospital and the BC Family Hearing Resource Center in Surrey, BC. It was during that first year that Hunter was surgically implanted with bi lateral cochlear implants. In order to actually follow through with the necessary speech and language therapy needed to teach him how to use his implants, we watched as the CDC went to work forging through new relationships with facilities that primarily work out of the lower mainland. It was through the hard work and endless determination of each of our team members that we have seen the success' with Hunter and the breakthroughs in his communication. We have been given the opportunities to participate in services such as sign language lessons via web cam, preschool programs that have been adapted to facilitate a learning environment suited to Hunters specific hearing and speech needs, weekly speech sessions, toddler speech therapy groups and access to a most fantastic resource library containing everything from children's books and games to Signing Time DVD's designed to effectively teach sign language to a toddler. Our life with Hunter has been an adventure...as is with each of our children. This past spring, Hunter was found to have a condition in his eyes known as retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative eye disease which in his case is most probably linked to a condition known as Ushers Syndrome. We feel ourselves stretched, at times, as we reorganize our game plan and seek the assistance we need to prepare Hunter for the possibility of a life without sight. Presented with this new information, again our team is fast and hard at work. We have joined forces and watch in awe as these most amazing individuals work together with services from the Sunny Hill Health Centre, the Canadian Deaf Blind Association and our dear friends at BC Family Hearing Resource Centre. We are witness to the efforts and talents directed towards him the best possible chance to succeed. There has not been a time when we have been left on our own, to search out the help we need. Our local CDC has walked each step with us as we have been learning to teach our son to listen with his cochlear implants, form the words he needs to speak and now, to be aware and informative to all he sees and what it will mean for him later in life. I believe every parent wants to see the best for their child....and when we find ourselves faced with a challenging situation like working with a little one that needs just that extra bit of help....it really gives you the chance to see how important a facility like this is and what a blessing it is to have them right here in our community.

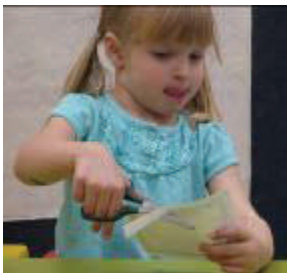


Dan and Chrystal Wuthrich



“This is the best CDC facility I’ve seen”

“My child loves preschool. He is happy to be there. I feel very confident in the staff. They show good judgment and kindness when interacting with the kids. Our experience has been 100% positive.” ~ *ELP Parent*



“ . . . we contacted the CDC in order to inquire about a speech therapist. We got so much more than what we bargained for: we found a family . . . Without the efforts of the CDC, the child we know today would not exist. We are indebted to them indefinitely and are lucky they are part of Fort St John. ”

~ *CDC Parent*



“My wife was at a conference recently and she was approached by someone who told her that our CDC was the best CDC in Western Canada, bar none. Apparently, the person who spoke to her had her little one at the CDC and they moved away. They could not get the quality of CDC care in their new location so they moved back to FSJ so that their child could continue with the excellent care at our CDC.”

~ *CDC Board Member*

“I was touring a visual consultant from Sunny Hill, around the building yesterday and she was VERY impressed with the physical environment of your play centre. She would actually like photographs so she can show them to other daycares, preschools and drop-in play centres when she is teaching them how to make accessible spaces for children with visual impairments. So in short...you have WOWed an expert!...great job.”

~ *CDC Staff Member reports on visit from Sunny Hill Health Centre in Vancouver*





Project Build-A-Fort

Project Build-A-Fort started with \$1.1M as a foundation to the building project that was fundraised over the years leading up to 2008. From 2008 to the time of this publication, \$532,000 has been donated towards the project with total monies raised to be approximately \$1.6M.

Dream to Reality

Major Sponsors



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Generosity at Work

More than 1600 different individuals and businesses gave financially towards

Project Build-A-Fort since 2008

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