



Child Development Centre

Spring 2015

From My Window

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Another programming year is soon coming to an end – time sure seems to move more quickly this time of year! May and June are busy as staff are still travelling, seeing families, attending transition meetings and trying to squeeze in their paperwork. As usual, a large number of families are getting ready to make the move to kindergarten. We wish them all the best in this next stage of kids growing up!

The Board of Directors and staff spent time developing a new strategic plan that will guide the work we will do over the next 4 – 5 years. With a successful accreditation survey behind us we have continued to work towards new standards and ensuring we are providing quality services. We are excited that Amy Riske, program coordinator, has been invited to become a CARF surveyor and will begin training this summer. In her role as surveyor she will have the opportunity to see many different agencies across the country and hopefully will be bringing back some great ideas.

The Board and staff would like to extend a very big thank you to the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Nixon, for the recent contribution agreement from the Yukon Government. Support such as this makes it much easier for us to focus on our work with kids and families.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer....and don't forget our Annual General Meeting takes place on June 10th. Alayne

Upcoming Events

Annual General Meeting

Please join us for our Annual General Meeting.

When: June 10, noon – 1PM

Where: Child Development Centre Gym

A light lunch will be provided. If you have any questions please call us at 456-8182.



From The Mouths of kids

- ◆ When my daughter, was 4 or 5, she was having some "growing pains" in her legs and needed to take some Tylenol™. She had the bottle and was trying in vain to get it open while I changed her baby sister's diaper. I saw her frustration and explained that it was a childproof cap and I would have to open it when I finished. Eyes wide with wonder, Brittany asked, "How does it know it's me?"
- ◆ One day my five year old informed me that she didn't have to go to school to learn, because she could remember everything by taking a picture. She said she had a camera in her head she takes pictures with it to help her remember things. So I asked, "Then how is it you always seem to forget about picking up your toys?" She replied, "Sometimes I forget to put film in it."
- ◆ My son asked me the other day, 'Mum can I have a baby sister?' I said no, you already have two big sisters. He turned to me and said 'Oh well I just thought I'd ask. You don't get anything if you don't ask so just thought I'd ask.' Then he just walked away, leaving me laughing.



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

It is hard to think about the fall when we haven't even begun our short summer season! For families with children starting school for the first time in August, you may have already begun thinking about this exciting time in your lives.

The Centre of Excellence for Children's Well-Being has a fantastic resource about school transition; you can find it at <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/en-ca/school-transition/key-messages.html?GCIId=40>. All schools have a kindergarten information night where families can get a lot of practical information about kindergarten, as well as ask any questions they have. If you are unsure when that information night is happening, feel free to give your child's school a phone call to find out.

At the Child Development Centre, our staff works very closely with families who want additional planning for the start of school. With families' permission, we help to share information with the principals, kindergarten teachers, learning assistance teachers and Student Support Services. The goal is to help each child have a positive start to school. If you would like to know more about Student Support Services - you can check out the Yukon Education website at www.education.gov.yk.ca or call Karen Campbell,

Manager of Student Support Services at 332-1703.

Parent Story

Hello,

My name is Amber Walker. I am a local artist/graphic designer/web designer/Autism advocate here in Whitehorse. I have two children; my son who will turn 5 this year and my daughter who is 18 months. My family's journey began with the Child Development Center in 2010 when our Healthy Families worker referred us. My son a.k.a. my hero, was experiencing speech delay along with a myriad of other developments my partner and I suspected were related to Autism.

In August of that year my son began services with a speech and language therapist and was referred for an Autism Assessment. In December of 2013 we found out he was on the Autism Spectrum.

I always say it's your perspective that drives how difficult something really is. My husband and I went through a myriad of emotions from relief to heartbreak, and I was grateful for the more than available staff at the CDC, who saw us through that time smoothly. They accepted our views unconditionally and supported us in the, not bad but always complex, labyrinth of Autism.

It was in the CDC's kindness that I found inspiration to pay it forward in some way. I felt inspired to help make positive changes. In August of 2014 I joined the Family Partnership Council at the CDC. Being on this council has helped opened my eyes to the partnerships that are created between parents and the CDC and how important they are for any child coming to the CDC for the first time, whether they are there for the Follow Along program, the preschool, or first time referrals. Partnerships are what drive us forward to effect a populous. They steer change and create a better understanding of what everyone involved is saying. Partnerships create space for communication and I feel like there's nothing better than being heard and understood, something the council excels at. This is what my family found at the CDC; a place where we were heard. And anyone who's going through speech therapy with their child understands the relief, joy, and gratitude, of being heard and understood. I would recommend the CDC to everybody, if not for service than at least for a tea, a friendly hello, and a place to connect with other parents and educators. I am more than grateful to the CDC and the journey they have taken with us and will be misty eyed when my son moves on from their preschool program to kindergarten. I, however, plan on being with the CDC in whatever capacity I can, whether it's advocating, graphic design, communications department, etc., because when everyone puts forth effort great things unfold.

Always Happily Here,

Amber Renee Walker

Positive Guidance versus Punishment

When responding to a child's strong emotions or misbehaviour a parent can either choose to punish their child or use positive guidance.

Positive guidance is to teach a child how to appropriately deal with situations and strong emotions. The purpose of guiding a child is to help her gain self-control so that she can develop skills to solve problems and make good choices. When parents act as a guide to their child, they:

- ♦ value a trusting and safe relationship with their child;
- ♦ provide consistent daily routines so their child knows what to expect;
- ♦ set clear, consistent, and reasonable limits with their child when necessary;
- ♦ use a calm, firm, fair, and friendly voice when setting limits;
- ♦ understand the child's temperament and developmental stage in order to teach in a way that makes sense to the child;
- ♦ strengthen their child's self-esteem by treating the child with respect and, when possible, giving their child a choice and a voice;
- ♦ model appropriate behavior; and
- ♦ help their child manage strong emotions.

Punishing a child is the opposite of guiding a child. Punishment means to cause pain, either physically or emotionally. Examples of punishment include spanking, hitting, humiliation, and withdrawal of affection. While punishment may stop a behavior in the short term, it is usually because the child is fearful of getting hurt. Punishment does not help a child gain the self-control and pro-social behaviors that lead to a healthy, fulfilling life in adulthood. Punishment also:

- ♦ stifles a trusting relationship between the parent and child and teaches the child to fear his parent;
- ♦ models aggression as an appropriate way to solve problems and manage conflict;
- ♦ gets in the way of developing trusting relationships with others; and
- ♦ negatively impacts a child's self-esteem.

The Child Development Centre recommends the "ACT" strategy for guiding a child's behavior as one tool for helping a child to manage difficult feelings or make different, more appropriate choices.

ACT is an acronym which means:

* **A - Acknowledge the child's feelings, wishes or wants**

This is an important step because it recognizes that a child does have feelings and that these feelings are acceptable. Verbalizing an empathetic understanding of the feeling often helps to diffuse its intensity. For example, "You want to play with that toy."

Positive Guidance versus Punishment continued

* C - Communicate the limit

Limits should be stated simply and specifically. It should be clear to the child as to what is appropriate/inappropriate or acceptable/unacceptable. For example, "Your brother was playing with that toy."

* T - Target acceptable alternatives

The child may not know other ways to express his feelings or wants at that moment. The adult provides alternatives to the child. For example, "You can ask to play with it when he is done or choose another toy."

Positive guidance strategies also include:

- ◆ Giving a child the opportunity to make choices. Being able to make a choice is one of the best ways for a child to develop a sense of control and independence. Keep in mind that too many choices can be overwhelming for a child. A choice of two things is a good place to start (e.g. "Would you like to wear your red pants or your blue pants today?").
- ◆ Giving clear statements. While offering a child choice helps them develop independence, it is important not to imply there is a choice when one really does not exist. Asking a child if they are ready to clean up their toys will not be as effective as stating, "Joey, it's time to clean up."
- ◆ Setting limits in clear, simple language. For example, if a child refuses to return a toy he has taken from his peer, a limit might be, "if you choose to keep the toy, you choose to have the toy go away for now."

Using positive guidance strategies can take time and patience. However, the long term benefits of this approach to children are many. The benefits include a healthy self-esteem, meaningful relationships with others, and the ability to solve problems in a safe way.

ACT



Staff Spotlight



Carole Kroening

Thirty years ago (!) I completed my first degree in Speech Language Pathology from the University of Alberta in 1985. I worked in some different Health Units in Alberta, and then my family moved to the Yukon in 1990. It was while we were living in Pelly Crossing that I first worked with the Child Development Centre in 1993. I joined the 'Outreach Team' (as we were known in those days) and drove up and down the Klondike highway with other CDC staff. I resumed my studies via 'summer school' at the U of A and completed my Master's Degree in SLP in 1998. By that time my family had moved to Whitehorse and I had joined the Kwanlin Dun Team. Since then at CDC I have taught the Chatterbugs language group, been both the teacher and the SLP for the preschool, led parent groups and courses for childcare staff, and travelled to every Yukon community for CDC except Haines Junction, Beaver Creek and Destruction Bay. Something I love about CDC is the variety of ways I am able to work, all with the goal of helping families improve their children's communication skills.

Thank you!

Adopt-a-Room Program

Thank you to all our wonderful room sponsors:

Polar Eyes Optometry—Linda's Room

Northern Windows and Doors—Integrated Therapeutic Preschool Room

Marla Veliscek—Eric's Room

Rendezvous Rotary—Library

Angellina's Toy Boutique—The Playroom

Also, thank you to TELUS for their recent donation to CDC!

Book review by Brooke Mckenzie

Strategies for Parenting Children with FASD.

"Be flexible. Instead of trying to change your child, change the way you deal with him. It is normal to make mistakes. Trust yourself. You can be a good parent!"

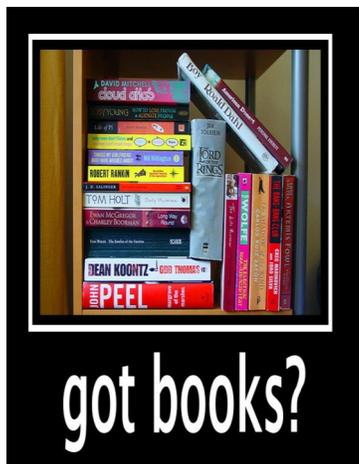
This book may appear small but it is incredibly informative. It provides a wide variety of tips for parents on how to manage challenging behaviours associated with FASD, teach specific skills, and adapt the environment to best suit the needs of the child. Other caregivers in the child's life, additional family members, and even community members may also find this book useful in helping them understand FASD and some of the more common challenging behaviours.

Topics covered include:

- What is FASD
- Characteristics of FASD
- Accepting the Differences
- You and Your Family
- Behaviour
- Life Skills

If you are interested in a copy of this book, please contact Brooke at 456-8182 ext 193 as there are

A Reminder from the Library



The Child Development Centre will be closing for the summer and would like to have all library books returned for cataloguing by **June 01 ,2015**.

If you have books to return please drop them off in our front office!

Thank You



Thank you!

Allen joined the board of the Child Development Centre in 1995! He is a well-respected elder in our community; teacher, advocate, father and grandfather (to name only a few!). He has continued to bring his wealth of knowledge of child development to board discussions and challenges us as a centre to continue to try and do better. His passion in this regard is second to none. This is Allen's last year on our Board - and we will miss him greatly; his passion, knowledge, energy, questions and humor.

Thank you Allen, for your many dedicated years to the Child Development Centre.

