

## IN THIS ISSUE

Session Spotlight .....	1
Designed for You .....	2
Upcoming Training .....	2
Share Your Story .....	3
Focus On Literacy .....	3
Health News For You .....	4
Promoting Your Event Made Easy.....	5
Community Events .....	5

# Making Connections



ISSUE 1, VOLUME 1

## SESSION SPOTLIGHT

**Making Time For Our Children - Thursday, February 26, 2009**

Many parents spend their 'less than relaxing' weekends shuttling their kids from one activity to another. Perhaps they drop their son off at hockey practice, then rush to pick their daughter up at ballet class. Next is a quick trip through the drive-thru restaurant, consuming lunch on-route to piano lessons. They won't want to be late picking up junior at hockey or he might not make it to rock-climbing on time.

If you are one of these parents or know someone who spends their time "hyper-parenting", then the "Making Time For Our Children" session is just what you need. Guest speakers Carl Honoré and Bill Gordon help us understand how the "fast paced" world that we have created impacts all of our lives. They will help us explore the pressures on our children and the importance of creating balance in our lives. Bill's and Carl's presentations are dynamic, eloquent, informative and full of humor. This session is geared towards early childhood practitioners. There are still spots available for the February 26, 2009 session. Register online at [www.ecdss.ca](http://www.ecdss.ca).



"Working together for our children's future."

Carl Honoré — Writer's Trust Award Nominee/  
Author/Professional Speaker

This bestselling author of *Under Pressure, Rescuing Childhood from the Culture of Hyper-Parenting* brings a fascinating look at childhood today and how we are raising a generation of over-programmed and exhausted children. Honoré's hope is to help find the natural balance between doing too much and too little for children. He helps audiences across the globe to see the world in a new light.



Bill Gordon—Teacher/Facilitator/Humorist/Motivator

This retired school teacher and counselor continues to work part-time with students attending "store-front" schools in Elk Island Public. Bill believes that those of us who choose to work towards creating better lives for others, often spend so much time caring for those around us and are woefully negligent in taking care of ourselves. Bill will speak about the importance of creating balance in our life and making sure that each of us takes time to give ourselves "gifts". Four of the most powerful "self-gifts" are laughter, learning, leisure, and love.



# DESIGNED FOR YOU

ECDSS is dedicated to the advancement and professional training of all frontline staff who work within the field of Early Childhood Development. As part of an ongoing process, we update our existing training programs and we develop new sessions in order to address the needs of practitioners in this region. Contact us for your training needs. E-mail [ecdss@shaw.ca](mailto:ecdss@shaw.ca) or call 780-428-9465.

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## UPCOMING TRAINING

### ECD Initial HOMES Training

This session is designed for Edmonton & Area Region 6 ECD funded programs. The training will cover the follow database collection areas:

- Case management
- Initial assessments
- Case notes
- Service plans
- Referrals to other services
- Surveys and developmental screens
- Progress reports
- Discharge
- Quality control

**Sold Out**

Date: March 9-10, 2009 (1.5 days)

Cost: Free (must pre-register)

### Core Relationship Based Practice Training Level I

Research shows home visitation can increase healthy child development, improve the mental and physical health and employability of mothers, and reduce family violence in high risk families, if the home visitation program is of high quality and if the home visitation program is part of a cluster of needed services and supports. Essential to the success of any such program is the training of those members from the community who will be conducting the home visits. The focus is on areas that enhance and prepare professionals for individualized support to families in a variety of home visiting programs.

Topics covered during the training include:

- Engaging Families
- Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Information
- Working Alone in the Community
- Boundaries
- Reflective Practice
- Goal Setting and Planning
- Self Care

Date: March 16-20, 2009 (5 days)

Cost: \$250.00

### ECD Refresher HOMES Training

This session is designed for Edmonton & Area Region 6 ECD funded programs. The training will cover the follow database collection areas:

- Progress reporting
- Adding new family goals
- Referrals to other services
- Practitioner quality control

Date: March 11, 2009 (0.5 day)

Cost: Free (must pre-register)

### Family Outreach Training

Outreach Work is personal work that is done professionally. One of the most challenging aspects of Outreach Work is engaging families and setting up successful programs to gain support and interest of the parents. This training focuses on areas that enhance and prepare professionals for individualized support to families in a variety of Early Intervention Programs.

- Engaging Families
- Successful Parent Involvement
- Parent Groups
- Child, Youth and Family Enhancement information
- Working Alone in the Community
- Boundaries, Home Visits, Self Care

Date: April 27-29, 2009 (3 days)

Cost: \$150.00

### Core Relationship Based Practice Training Level II

Level 2 Relationship Based Practice Training is a follow-up to Core Home Visitation Training. The focus is to enhance and highlight specific areas of practice that professionals experience when working long term with families.

Date: May 7-8, 2009 (2 days)

Cost: \$100.00

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[Click Here  
to Register Online](#)

# SHARE YOUR STORY

This newsletter is not just our information to you. It is a venue for you to talk to others. Can you tell us about a program that is showing positive effects on children or families? Do you have a feel-good story or humorous moment to share? Let us in on your good news and, with your permission, we would like to include it in upcoming newsletters. Send your story and contact information to Nicole at [nmv@shaw.ca](mailto:nmv@shaw.ca).

## FOCUS ON LITERACY

### Family Literacy

#### What is Family Literacy?

Family literacy is not just about reading and writing. Family literacy refers to the many ways families develop and use literacy skills, from enjoying a storybook together at bedtime, to playing word games, singing, writing a letter to a relative, sharing day-to-day tasks such as making a shopping list or using a recipe, and surfing the internet for fun and interesting sites. (Family Literacy in Canada: Profiles of Effective Practices, Adele Thomas, Soleil Publishing Inc., 1998)

#### How Does Family Literacy Benefit a Child?

Benefits for a child include the chance to spend more time with a parent. Reading together increases the child's level of attachment to their parent. It enhances a sense of security and imparts the knowledge that their parent feels they are a worthwhile person to spend time with. (How to Raise a Reader, 1987). Reading aloud to a child improves their listening skills, vocabulary and language skills. They develop their imagination and creativity. (Family Literacy Foundation; 2001).

#### How Do Parents Benefit From Family Literacy?

By spending time on literacy activities with their children, a parent's literacy skills will no doubt improve as well. Parents will develop a closer relationship with their child by having the opportunity to talk about and explore topics that are important to both of them. The parent is able to be more involved in their child's education. The family unit becomes stronger and there is a healthier connection to the community. Literacy skills are linked to work skills, health and self-esteem. Higher literacy skills enable adults to participate more fully in our economy and our society.

#### How Can We Promote Family Literacy?

Remember that family literacy programming is not just to help children, it is to encourage parents to improve their literacy skills as well. Spend time assisting parents with filling out forms, making shopping lists, or creating a monthly calendar. Other strategies include modeling behavior and introducing fun activities, such as songs, word searches and puzzles, etc.

Not all families have a pile of books and reading materials at home. Giving them access to books and activities for home-use is important. Introduce families to the library. The library is an inexpensive way to access all sorts of materials and programs.

### Links to Literacy

There are many literacy ideas and activities that can be found on the web. Here are a few that are Albertan or Canadian:

- [www.parentlinkalberta.ca](http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca)
- [www.literacy-alberta.ca](http://www.literacy-alberta.ca)
- [www.abc-canada.org](http://www.abc-canada.org)
- [www.familit.ca/](http://www.familit.ca/)
- [www.epl.ca](http://www.epl.ca)

### Family Literacy Day Reading Your Way to Success!

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Family Literacy Day held on January 27, 2009 was another success. More than 1,500 libraries, schools, homes and workplaces led literacy-themed events.

This year Canadians were asked to participate in the world record breaking attempt for 'Most Children Reading with an Adult, Multiple Locations'. The number to beat was 78,791 participants. Pre-registration numbers indicated 190,000 people planned to participate in the event.

The number of participants are still being submitted. Chances are we have the new world record. To see how Canadians fared, check out the ongoing tally on [www.abc-canada.org/en/fld/2008/map.html](http://www.abc-canada.org/en/fld/2008/map.html).



# HEALTH NEWS FOR YOU

## When Colds Become Serious Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

To most adults a cold is just an annoyance. Yet passing your cold onto a baby can have more serious effects. Baby colds can quickly turn into something more severe, sometimes referred to as RSV, or acute bronchiolitis.

### What is RSV?

RSV is a common germ that causes respiratory infection in persons of all ages. RSV can cause pneumonia in children less than three years old. It is easily spread by coughing, sneezing, and by touch. Because RSV is a virus, antibiotics do not help to cure it.

Hearing a child has RSV can cause fear in parents. When they think about RSV, parents have a picture of a child with a non-stop cough, who is wheezing, huffing and puffing. While RSV can cause serious symptoms, it is important to remember that many children infected with RSV just get a simple cold or mild symptoms. Most children will become infected with RSV by age two. Fortunately most of them do not have serious infections.

### Is RSV Serious?

For most children and adults, RSV causes only a mild cold. The following children are at greatest risk for RSV:

- children less than two months old
- premature babies
- those with complicated heart conditions
- those with depressed immunity or have diseases that affect their immunity
- those with chronic lung problems.

### How Can I Prevent My Child From Being Infected?

It is impossible to completely prevent exposure to illnesses caused by viruses. Here are some ways to limit exposure to viruses:

- frequent hand-washing for you and your children
- proper disposal of used tissues
- keeping sick children home during the first days of illness to prevent exposing others to the germs.



### How Can I Tell If My Child Has RSV?

A doctor diagnoses RSV. A child with RSV may have cold-like symptoms such as:

- runny nose with thick, sticky mucous
- cough
- mild fever
- sore throat
- mild irritability and discomfort
- wheezing (a high-pitched, whistling sound when breathing out)

Symptoms may become worse for two to five days and then improve. The wheezing and coughing can last for longer periods of time.

### What Can I Do to Help my Child With RSV?

- Keep your child home during the first days of illness.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids. This prevents dehydration and helps to loosen thick mucous.
- If your child has a fever or is irritable, you may give an acetaminophen product (examples: Tylenol, Tempra, Panadol) for comfort and to reduce fever. Follow instructions on the box or bottle.
- Do not give aspirin products (example: acetylsalicylic acid, ASA).
- Do not expose your child to cigarette smoke.

Health News For You is submitted by Kathy Newman, R.N.. Information on this month's topic was taken directly from [www.capitalhealth.ca](http://www.capitalhealth.ca) and [www.about.com](http://www.about.com).

# PROMOTING YOUR EVENT MADE EASY

Let's make this your page. Why don't you use this page to promote your upcoming events, fundraisers, etc.? Tell us what your agency is planning, including why it is important to you. After the event, don't forget to send us a follow-up story and some photos. E-mail your information to [nmv@shaw.ca](mailto:nmv@shaw.ca). Pull out all the stops and include our newsletter in your promotion plan!

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Family Day - Monday, February 16, 2009**

### Edmonton Events

#### Alberta Legislature

Enjoy FREE activities including skating, wagon rides, children's crafts, tours, Carnival of Magic, and hot chocolate. For more information call 780-427-7362. or visit [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

#### Downtown

Enjoy FREE activities on the Square, including hayrides, games, arts and crafts. For more information call 780-424-4085 or visit [www.edmontondowntown.com](http://www.edmontondowntown.com).

#### Rutherford House

Discover Edwardian family life as you tour the historic mansion of Alberta's first Premier Alexander Rutherford. Activities include old-fashioned crafts, and tasting cookies baked in the wood-burning stove. For more information call 780-427-3995.

#### The John Janzen Centre - Winter Wilds.

Indoor and outdoor activities including games, crafts, a bonfire, music, and stories about the Canadian wild. For more information call 780-496-2925 or visit [www.edmonton.ca](http://www.edmonton.ca).

### Outside Edmonton

#### The Town of Gibbons

Come and enjoy a pancake breakfast, family dance, and many more activities. For more information call 780-923-3331 or visit [www.gibbons.ca](http://www.gibbons.ca).

#### The Town of Morinville

Lots of great family and children events including a family snowman competition. For more information call 780-939-4361 or visit [www.morinville.ca](http://www.morinville.ca).

#### The City of Leduc

Pack up your family, your skates and your bathing suits and head to the Leduc Recreation City for an afternoon of activities. For more information visit call 780-980-7120 or visit [www.leduc.ca](http://www.leduc.ca).

#### Wabumun Lake - 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Day Ice Fishing Extravaganza

This event is held on Sunday, February 15, 2009. Bring along your entire family, even the dog, for a day of ice fishing. You will be helping to raise funds for a special day of fishing for kids being sponsored by the Make-a-Wish Foundation of Northern Alberta. The cost is \$40.00 per hole, this includes hot dogs, hamburgers, coffee and hot chocolate. For more information visit [www.rumwaladventures.ca](http://www.rumwaladventures.ca) or call 780-464-7423.

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### Head for the Hills

Ready, set, hold on! Tobogganing is a great way to get fresh air and exercise while spending quality time with your kids. These hills have been prepared by the City of Edmonton for safe sliding, equipped with run outs, signage and reduced hazards.

- Argyll Park, 83 Street & 63 Avenue
- Emily Murphy Park, 11904 Emily Murphy Park Road
- Gallagher Park, 9411 – 97 Avenue
- Government House Park, Groat Road & River Valley Road
- Jackie Parker Recreation Area, 4540 – 50 Street
- Millwoods Park, 2730 – 66 Street
- Rundle Park, 2903 – 113 Avenue
- Whitemud Park, 13204 – Fox Drive.



**Edmonton & Area**  
Child & Family Services Region 6

Early Childhood Development Support Services is supported by funding through the Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA). This funding is provided to assist Early Childhood Development funded service providers with program delivery, program development, data collection, evaluation and training. Through ongoing collaboration with the CFSA, this newsletter is intended to provide information to service providers pertaining to these services.