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Making Connections



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ECDSS UPDATES

Making Connections For Our Children's Future (the Survivor Addition)

It's time to register for our upcoming all-sites resource conference. This all-day session will provide an opportunity to connect with a number of resources in the region in a fun and interactive way. This conference is more than just a resource fair, it is a resource simulation. It will provide opportunity for program staff to network with each other and pool their knowledge about available resources in the region. We are looking forward to seeing you there.

Date: October 20, 2009
9:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

Location: North Pointe Community Church,
10425—167 Avenue, Edmonton

Cost: \$15.75 (GST included)

Register online at www.ecdss.ca/events.php

Save the Date for Dr. Bruce Perry

Dr. Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D. is a clinician and researcher in children's mental health and the neurosciences, and an internationally-recognized authority on children in crisis. He will join us again at our February 25, 2010 spring conference for an all-day presentation on "Working with Traumatized Children". Mark your calendars, you won't want to miss this one!

Upcoming EI Sector Meeting

Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2009
9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Location: Robertson-Wesley United Church,
10209—123 Street, Edmonton.

Professional Development Dates for Fall

A few of the course dates have changed. If you have already registered in a session, please visit www.ecdss.ca/events.php to verify you have the correct date for training in your calendar.

Site Visit Update

We are nearing completion of our site visits. Thank you to those who met with Tracy Bridges, Heather Wagner Schmidt, and Nicole Vogel. We enjoyed meeting the program teams.

We have gathered useful information to plan upcoming professional development opportunities. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with program staff so we can effectively support you.



"Working together for our children's future."

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Parent Group Facilitation Skills—Level 1

Learn the newest tips and strategies to engage a group and make learning fun. Based on adult learning principles, this training takes facilitation to the next level by incorporating learning styles, group dynamics, and interactive engagement.

Date: September 3, 2009 (1 day)

Cost: \$52.50

Kids Have Stress Too

Research shows that even young children can learn to manage their stress effectively. Participants who complete this course are qualified to present workshops to parents and caregivers on how to recognize stress in children, identify stressors, and teach age-appropriate stress-management techniques. Participants are provided with materials to teach the workshops.

Date: September 10, 2009 (1 day) or ← **Sold Out**
October 22, 2009

Cost: \$78.75

Relationship Based Practice —Level I (Formerly known as Core Home Visitation Training)

This session focuses on building the knowledge and skills of relationship based practitioners, exploring values and beliefs, and gaining practical strategies for reaching, engaging and supporting hard to reach families. This training will increase awareness and knowledge of child abuse, duty to report, establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries. Practitioners will explore communication strategies, safety practices for working alone, confidentiality and self-care.

Dates: September 21-25, 2009 (5 days) or
December 7-11, 2009 (5 days)

Cost: \$255.00

Relationship Based Practice —Level II

This session focuses on deeper exploration of relationship based practices. Participants will explore interdisciplinary practices and how to collaborate with other professionals. Participants are challenged to look at their own values and beliefs and to explore the impact on their ability to support families. Participants will drill deeper into the topic of maintaining healthy boundaries, case-note writing, ethics and leadership.

Date: November 26-27, 2009 (2 days) or
February 18-19, 2010 (2 days)

Cost: \$105.00

Kouzes and Posner Leadership Challenge

Backed by 25 years of original research and data from over 3 million leaders, The Leadership Challenge® is a leadership development program by bestselling authors Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner. Approaching leadership as a measurable, learnable, and teachable set of behaviors, this proven leadership model proclaims Leadership Is Everyone's Business.

Date: October 1-2 and 30, 2009 (3 days) or
March 4-5 and March 26, 2010 (3 days)

Cost: \$472.50

Region 6 EI Programs contact Tracy Bridges for bursary information. Phone: 780-428-9465 or e-mail: training@ecdss.ca.

Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and Ages & Stages Social/Emotional (ASQ-SE)

This session provides the essentials of using the ASQ and the ASQ:SE tools. These questionnaires are flexible, culturally-sensitive systems for screening infants and young children for developmental delays or concerns in the crucial first five years of life.

Date: October 14, 2009 (1 day) or
February 17, 2010 (1 day)

Cost: \$47.25

Child Development

This session explores child development within the context of relationships. Participants will learn the basic concepts of brain development, relationship development and how interactions between child and caregiver create the crucial foundation for healthy development. Participants will explore the roots of challenging behavior and learn strategies to positively engage children in ways that build relationships.

Date: November 16-17, 2009 (2 days) or
January 21-22, 2010 (2 days)

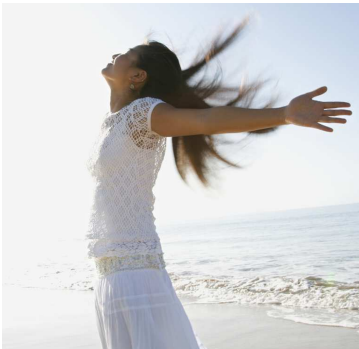
Cost: \$105.00

Register Online
www.ecdss.ca/events.php

TIME FOR RENEWAL

It's the time of year for many of us when we plan to take some time off. Vacations are meant to be relaxing, a time to rejuvenate our mind and body, a time to let go of stress and renew ourselves.

For some of us, it is a struggle to walk away from the office and leave the work behind. We are working in a society that has conditioned us to value productivity as opposed to work-life balance.¹ We know we need to disengage, take time to unwind, spend time with our family, yet there may be some guilt that comes along with the thought of time off. There is the guilt that we don't want our co-workers to have to cover our caseload while we are away. There might be guilt that spending money on a vacation isn't wise in this unstable economy, perhaps we better put our vacation funds into savings for another few years. Some of us believe a vacation is pointless if our desks will be piled up when we get back and we will never catch up on the time we have missed.



We need to remember that if we don't balance our work and home life, we will not be productive in either parts of our lives. It is important to take care of ourselves in order to have healthy minds and bodies to then be able to help others.

WHEN TECHNOLOGY COMES ALONG

Not long ago, when employees took a vacation, they could actually get away from it all. Office equipment was too big to bring along, and people normally did not give out their hotel's telephone number to everyone on their rolodex.

Ah, the wonderful advancements in technology has changed things quite a bit... Many of us take our laptops or blackberries on vacation and wireless connections in hotels are now as easy to come by as an in-room coffeemaker. Every client has our cell phone number programmed into their speed dial. And we know that it's just not possible to leave the cell phone at home...what if there was an emergency?

Many people think they are indispensable to the office and use their technology to ensure their presence on the job. The wireless world will follow you everywhere unless you make a determined effort to escape, or at the very least, to manage it. If you absolutely can't leave technology at home, set limits as to the amount of time you will allow e-mail and phone calls to interrupt your vacation time. Discuss with your family what they think is an acceptable amount of time, they need your attention too.³



Most of us have heard of Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Habit Seven is 'Sharpen the Saw'. This one focuses on preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have...you. It means having a balanced program for self renewal in the four areas of your life: physical, social/emotional, mental, and spiritual. Some examples of activities to focus on are:

- **Physical**
Healthy eating, exercising, and resting.
- **Social/Emotional**
Making social and meaningful connections with friends, family and colleagues.
- **Mental**
Learning, reading, writing, and teaching
- **Spiritual**
Spending time in nature, expanding spiritual self through mediation, music, art, prayer, or service

As you renew yourself in each of the four areas, you create growth and change in your life. Sharpening the Saw keeps you fresh, you increase your capacity to produce and handle the challenges around you. Without this renewal, the body becomes weak, the mind mechanical, the emotions raw and the spirit insensitive. Remember that every day provides a new opportunity for renewal--a new opportunity to recharge yourself instead of hitting the wall.²

RELIEVING WORKPLACE STRESS

Common Sources of Stress in the Human Services Field

Here are common sources of stress that human service workers may be faced with:

- Intensive caring for others at the expense of self-care
- Trying to live up to clients' high expectations and/or their own
- Inability to set appropriate boundaries
- Pushing themselves too hard
- Mental and physical demands
- Heavy workloads
- Long hours on the job
- Time pressures
- Limited resources
- Competing priorities⁴

Quick Activities to Help You Disengage from Work

- Take a day off once a month to relax and have absolutely no agenda - Many of us go from lists of things to do at work to another list with things to do at home. Taking a day a month to do whatever you feel like doing can be very energizing. There is a sense of freedom that is exhilarating.
- Fifteen minute meditation daily – Meditation refreshes the body and the soul during the day. Keeping your mind rested without thoughts of work is often challenging to people who are always on the go. Try music, a meditation tape or CD, or sitting outside.
- Fifteen minutes reading for pleasure daily – Get into a good novel, read something inspirational, or find some poetry that is meaningful to you. Get engrossed with your mind totally off your work challenges. Set a timer, if necessary, if you worry you'll forget to go back to work!

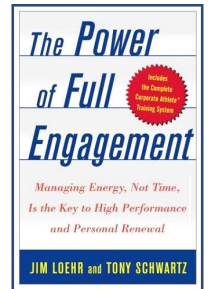
Attentive Supervisors Can Minimize Workplace Stress

- Set the tone by relating to workers with respect and valuing their contributions.
- Hold regular staff meetings to plan, problem solve, recognize accomplishments, and promote staff cohesiveness.
- Clearly communicate the rationale behind procedural or supervisory changes and performance expectations.
- Create a formal employee suggestion system and encourage staff to contribute.
- Resolve conflicts early and quickly.
- Acknowledge that work is often stressful and connect staff to professional help if necessary.
- Promote an atmosphere where attention to one's emotional state is acceptable and encouraged rather than stigmatized or disregarded.⁵

INTERESTING READ

The Power of Full Engagement Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz

Authors, Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz demonstrate that managing energy, not time, is the key to enduring high performance as well as to health, happiness, and life balance.



The number of hours in a day is fixed, but the quantity and quality of energy available to us is not. This fundamental insight has the power to revolutionize the way you live your life. *The Power of Full Engagement* is a highly practical, scientifically based approach to managing your energy more skillfully both on and off the job.

The Power of Full Engagement provides a powerful, step-by-step program that will help you to:

- Mobilize four key sources of energy
- Balance energy expenditure with intermittent energy renewal
- Expand capacity in the same systematic way that elite athletes do
- Create highly specific, positive energy management rituals.

Readers can work towards becoming physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and spiritually aligned.



CONNECTING WITH DICKINSFIELD AMITY HOUSE THEIR PROGRAMS AND STAFF SUPPORTS

Dickinsfield Amity House (DAH) is exactly as the name implies 'peaceful and friendly' and 'promoting good relations'. I went to DAH to learn a little more about the programming they offer. As I walked up to their building, I could see preschoolers rolling down a grassy hill, talking and giggling. These little people must be participants of the *Teaching Tots* program.

Teaching Tots is a year-round early intervention preschool program that provides high-quality enrichment to ensure that all children can start school on equal footing. The program is available to low-income families, many are newcomers to Canada, some are refugees of war-torn countries. The preschool program also has a family support worker on staff to provide information and assistance to the parents.

I met with Tracy Patience, Program Director at DAH. As we chatted she told me about some of the unique elements of the preschool program. Every Tuesday is *Arts for Tots* day. Local artists are brought in to engage the children in a wide range of activities including playing musical instruments, singing, painting, drawing, etc. *Arts for Tots* provides these children with opportunities to develop their creativity and their confidence. It opens up their world to different possibilities, encourages them to talk to the artist and introduces them to arts from a variety of cultures.

The preschoolers and their families are invited to attend two big fieldtrips each year. Tracy books a coach bus and sends out the invitation to families to come to the Calgary Zoo for the day. Tracy usually ends up booking a second bus to accommodate siblings, mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, etc. These all-day field trips are always a big success.



There are a variety of other programs offered at DAH. They have an open-door policy where members of the community can drop in for a coffee and stay and chat about any issues going on in their life. There is a weekly conversation class for those who want to practice their English in a comfortable, encouraging environment. A collective kitchen is run twice per month.

Tracy and I talked a bit about how she helps her staff to avoid stress, how to support them when they need to disengage and how to encourage self-care. Tracy has some supports in place to take care of her staff's well-being. She encourages any staff member to come in to her office anytime and close the door and talk about any situation that is bothering them. It's important to let out anything that is causing stress and not bottle it up inside. Tracy says she also supports her staff when they need time off for their families. She tells them she would be upset if they didn't ask for time off to attend a family event. Tracy believes that family should be top priority for her staff. Co-workers help each other out by offering to cover off for each other when needed. We agreed that it is difficult to help others if you are not taking care of yourself first.

As I was sitting in the office, I was inhaling the smell of something delicious cooking in the kitchen across the hall. A lady from the community drops in quite often to visit and cook for the staff or anyone who's around. She knocked on the door of Tracy's office and with a confident smile, she proudly announced her meal was ready. We wrapped up our meeting and as I headed out the door, the cook insisted I stay and have some lunch. I agreed and was thrilled to end my visit, sitting in the main room with the staff and clients and enjoying a fabulous ethnic lunch.

LOW OR NO COST FAMILY EVENTS THIS SUMMER

Edmonton hosts many FREE festivals each summer that can quickly become costly if you are taking an entire family. Sticking to a small budget is possible if you plan ahead. Keep these tips in mind:

- Pack your lunch and PLENTY to drink. Buying food or even bottled water from a vendor adds up quickly.
- Avoid buying treats for the kids. Instead, have kids decorate a paper lunch bag at home, fill it with popcorn and take it with you to the festival. For an added surprise, hide a jellybean or sticker in the popcorn.
- Avoid the souvenir booths. Before the event do some discount shopping. You can find small toys, balloons, balls, pencils, etc. in a ten-cent bin at a garage sale or second-hand store. When the kids start asking for a souvenir, pull out the low-cost, "new" toy from home.

2009 Heritage Festival August 1-3, 2009

The 2009 Heritage Festival at Hawrelak Park in Edmonton will feature 62 pavilions representing over 75 cultures from all over the world. Watch creative performances, chat with people eager to tell you a little about their cultural roots.

Admission to the festival is FREE. A donation for Edmonton's Food Bank is always appreciated. Food is sold at each pavilion for a cost, or why not pack your own lunch and a blanket and eat while enjoying the entertainment?

Edmonton Transit offers park-and-ride service to the park as there is no public parking onsite. To find out more, visit the website www.heritage-festival.com.

Edmonton International Fringe Festival August 13-23, 2009

Head down to Old Strathcona to take part in the Edmonton Fringe Festival. Walk around and enjoy the atmosphere, watch the street performers, or take in a play.

Admission to the grounds is by donation. Tickets to some performances are an additional charge. For more information visit www.fringetheatretheadventures.ca

High Level Bridge Streetcar

Take a ride back into history this summer. The High Level Bridge streetcar travels back and forth from Old Strathcona to 109 Street, south of Jasper Avenue. Enjoy spectacular views of the river valley. Stopovers are permitted, so why not stop at the legislature grounds for a picnic and a dip in the fountain pools?

Ages 6 and Up - \$4.00, Children (5 and under) - FREE

For more information, visit the website at www.edmonton-radial-railway.ab.ca.

Edmonton Public Library (EPL)

EPL offers hundreds of FREE programs and events at their 16 branches throughout the city, to all age groups, to satisfy everyone's interests. Program categories include: health and wellness, computers, money and law, crafting, gardening and other hobbies, multicultural programs, music, puppet shows, science and discovery, film, etc.

Some interesting titles include:

- Communicating with Confidence for Teens
- Interview Technique Workshop
- Practical Hints for Spending Less and Saving More
- Self Relaxation Tips
- Henna Body Art
- Kitty Storytime (yes, even your cat is invited to this one).

Visit www.epl.ca/events and search the database by branch, date, category, or title.

Play Day at the Park August 25, 2009, 9:30 am - 3:00 pm

A day of free play for all ages at Broadmoor Lake Park in Sherwood Park

Activities include:

- digging for treasure in the sand
- dashing down the slip "n" slide
- building cardboard forts and space ships
- playing with coloured water
- running through a sprinkler
- blowing bubbles

For more information call 780-464-8470 or e-mail: recreation@strathcona.ab.ca.

WORK/LIFE BALANCE LINKS

BC Council for Families
Balancing work and family...you've got the power
www.bccf.bc.ca/hm/inside.php?sid=42&id=121

Families and Work Institute
Non-profit research organization that studies work-life balance
www.familiesandwork.org

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada provides information on developing and implementing work-life balance programs, policies and practices and of creating a supportive work environment.
www.hrsdc.gc.ca/

DID YOU KNOW...

Baby Teethers May Contain Bacteria

Testing by Health Canada of baby teethers has revealed that the liquid filling of some brands is contaminated with bacteria. A number of teethers have been recalled this month.

For a list of children's products, including teethers, cribs, playpens, pacifiers, etc., visit the Healthy Canadians website at: www.healthycanadians.gc.ca.

Food recalls and warnings are also listed on this site.

Kids Up Front Gets Kids to Big Events

Kids Up Front Foundation believes that the level of family income plays a crucial role in a child's development process. *Kids Up Front* is dedicated to providing access to arts and culture, sports and recreation for kids who would not otherwise have the opportunity.

If you have tickets for child-friendly events that you can't use, please remember to donate them to *Kids Up Front*. The agency can quickly re-distribute the tickets to their registered agencies. They will gladly except same-day event tickets if you contact them by noon on the day of the event.

For additional information on how to donate tickets or to ensure your agency is on the list for receiving, visit their website at www.kidsupfrontedmonton.com or call 780-409-2632.



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.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT
SUPPORT SERVICES LTD.



"Working together for our children's future."

Contact Us

Office/Mailing Address:
205, 10544 – 114 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5H 3J7

Phone: 780-428-9465
Fax: 780-444-3154
Email: info@ecdss.ca
Website: www.ecdss.ca

Contributors

Writing/Research: Nicole Vogel
Editor: Heather Wagner-Schmidt

Resources

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