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# Making Connections



## ECDSS UPDATES

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### Happy Holidays To You

The staff at ECDSS would like to thank all those we have collaborated with over the year. Whether you attended training opportunities with us, participated on committees, attended meetings or welcomed us to your program sites, we have enjoyed connecting with you! We look forward to working with you again in the coming year. We wish you success and good health in 2010!



*"Working together for our children's future."*

### Back By Popular Demand... ECDSS Presents a Day of Learning and Interaction with Dr. Bruce D. Perry M.D., Ph.D.

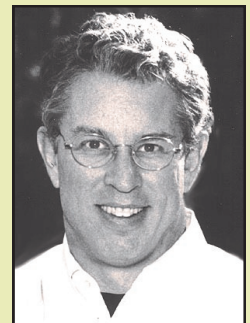
ECDSS is pleased to announce that Dr. Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D. from the ChildTrauma Academy will be presenting at our February 2010 conference. His expertise on child maltreatment, children's mental health, neurodevelopment and youth violence will give Early Intervention practitioners in our region relevant information to better understand and develop strategies to work with families living with these barriers.

The session will feature opportunities for discussion and interaction regarding strategies. Do not miss this amazing opportunity to listen to insight from a world-renowned expert on child trauma. Read more about Dr. Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D. by visiting his website at [www.childtraumaacademy.org](http://www.childtraumaacademy.org).

Date: February 25, 2010  
8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Location: North Pointe Church  
14025-167 Avenue  
Edmonton

We are now accepting registration for this event. For more information, visit our website at [www.ecdss.ca/](http://www.ecdss.ca/)



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# UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## 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.

Date: 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: February 18-19, 2010 (2 days)

Cost: \$105.00

## Engaging Families Through Goal Planning

Engaging families is complex, challenging, rewarding and at times frustrating. This session focuses on motivational factors for change, barriers for families and practitioners, strategies to promote change, and goal planning with families – Is it measurable, attainable and sustainable?

Date: January 28, 2010

Cost: \$15.75

Location: Sturgeon School Division Central Office  
9820 -104 Street, Morinville  
780-934-7941

Please note: The training facility and lunch is coordinated through Sturgeon School Division's Headstart Program. Our session fee does not include lunch; it will be available for an additional \$5.00. Please contact Joanne Amyotte at 780-934-7941 to order your meal.

## 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: January 19-20, 2010 (2 days)

Cost: \$105.00

## Mental Health First Aid Training

This session will provide a comprehensive introduction to common mental health disorders that impact many of the families supported by ECD programs. While practitioners are often well versed in physical first aid, there is often a lack of understanding related to mental health first aid. Four sessions will cover areas including common mental health problems, addictions, anxiety disorders, depression and psychotic disorders.

Date: February 11-12, 2010 (2 days)

Cost: \$78.75

## 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: February 17, 2010 (1 day)

Cost: \$47.25

## Kouzes and Posner Leadership Challenge

Backed by 25 years of original research and data from over three 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: March 4-5 and 26, 2010 (3 days)

Cost: \$472.50

Register Online at [www.ecdss.ca/events.php](http://www.ecdss.ca/events.php)

# MUSIC THERAPY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT



Numerous research studies have emphasized the effects that music exposure and music education have on a child's development. Research suggests that music can have a positive effect on many different areas of the developing child. Studies have shown various benefits to musical instruction in childhood, including:

## **Cognitive**

When children listen to and make music they use their imaginations to give musical form to ideas and feelings. Perception, memory, concept formation and problem solving abilities are developed.

## **Physical**

Through singing, dancing, and playing instruments, children may acquire increased control of their movements and their voices. A child's energy, flexibility, dexterity, strength, speed, coordination and breathing may improve.

## **Social**

Children can make music together with their parents, caregivers and peers. They learn to communicate ideas and feelings, adapt and negotiate, challenge, collaborate, celebrate and having fun.

## **Emotional**

Music enables children to express their feelings, to reflect, to change their mood . Music can soothe or excite them.

## **Therapeutic**

Music can be calming, stimulating, comforting and energizing.

## **Spiritual**

Music creates the conditions for contemplation and transcendence.

Music Therapy is an established healthcare profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of individuals of all ages. Music therapy is used to meet the needs of at-risk children and children with disabilities or illnesses. It can be particularly effective for children diagnosed with autism, Down syndrome, Williams syndrome, brain injury, speech disorders, and other learning disabilities. Music therapists believe that:

- Music stimulates all of the senses and involves the child at many levels. It is a multi-modality approach.
- Music can encourage socialization, self-expression, communication, and motor development.
- Music therapy can help a child manage pain, depression and stressful situations.
- The brain processes music in both hemispheres; music can stimulate cognitive functioning and may be used for remediation of some speech/language skills.
- Music is highly motivating, yet it can also have a calming and relaxing effect.
- Enjoyable music activities are designed to be success oriented and make children feel better about themselves.

Music therapy is easy to administer in a wide variety of settings including schools, hospitals, community centres and at home. It can be added as a component to programming for at-risk children or children with special needs.

Some people question if the studies on music's benefits are accurate. A study done in 1993 was responsible for the popular term "The Mozart Effect". This is the name attributed to the psychologists' findings that playing Mozart to their test subjects increased their spatial-temporal reasoning and improved memory. Many scholars have questioned this theory and additional studies have proven that the original study was flawed.

With or without the research, we know that as humans, music is an inherent part of who we really are, and its exposure during a child's early years can have effects on their overall wellbeing. What's most important is that we provide our children with a rich and varied environment that promotes their overall growth and development. Music can definitely play a key role in creating an enriching and stimulating environment for children.



# EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

## THE CONNECT SOCIETY

Earlier this month, I visited the program site of the Connect Society in Edmonton. I met with Kathy Holinski, Early Intervention Coordinator and Cheryl Redhead, Early Childhood Services Coordinator and many of the program staff. Connect Society was founded in 1963, with the belief that a child's future success in school depends on developing effective communication as early as possible.

The Society offers both site-based and outreach early intervention programs, a preschool program and a kindergarten program for children and their families affected by hearing loss. The families have a broad range of needs and abilities. The programs enroll children with a suspected or diagnosed hearing loss and children who are hearing who have a parent that is deaf or hard of hearing. The children in the program may also be experiencing delays in other areas of development in addition to hearing loss and have more complex needs.

The Connect Society's well-rounded programs include many different components to encourage language and communication skills including:

- Home-based visits
- In-home sign communication instruction
- Developmental screening
- Speech and language assessments
- Playgroups
- Parent support groups
- Family Literacy program
- Music Together program
- Links to other community health services.

I was interested to hear about the Music Together Program. This is an internationally recognized early childhood music program for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners, and their parents and caregivers. It is a fully research-based, developmentally appropriate early childhood music curriculum that strongly promotes parent and caregiver interaction.

Music Together classes are based on the recognition that all children are musical. Children can participate with confidence in the music of our culture provided that their early environment supports such learning. Connect Society staff who are trained in the program, offer weekly classes to parents and their children during parent group.

Connect Society was a warm and welcoming place, I didn't want to leave. I think the staff at the Connect Society must feel the same way...they rarely leave. The staff turnover is extremely low. I think Kathy and Cheryl said they hadn't had to hire new staff in about eight years. That's a retention record to be proud of!

I stayed all morning. After our meeting I toured the facility, participated in parent group, popped into playgroup, and even joined the hustle and bustle of a fire drill. I was thrilled to be handed an infant to carry and cuddle out to safety. Thank goodness it was only a drill. I was amazed how everyone quickly working together to follow safety procedures, getting classrooms of children and parents outside quickly. Connect Society staff are dedicated to the care, safety and development of their clients!



**Sheonagh McCullough,  
Family Literacy Coordinator**



**Kathy Holinski, EI Coordinator and  
Cheryl Redhead, ECS Coordinator**

# RESEARCH SHOWS...

## Building Character Starts at Home

What's the best way to develop characteristics of empathy, self-discipline and emotional control in kids? According to the new report *Building Character* from Demos, a UK-based social policy think tank, parents are children's primary character builders. Parents who combine warmth and consistency – a style described in the report as 'tough love', and also known as authoritative parenting – are the most successful in developing the character capabilities in their children that underpin healthy, happy, successful adult life.

While factors such as family background, family structure, ethnicity and income level also shape children's character development, the study confirms that parenting style heavily affects character development in the early years. Parental warmth, responsiveness, control and discipline have a large influence on children's character development. Tough love or authoritative parents are confident in their own parenting abilities and feel competent to influence their child, and they take advantage of opportunities to confront their child about misbehavior and to attend to their emotional needs.

Sonia Sodha, head of the research team that followed 9,000 families over eight years for the Demos study, commented that: "What we think the implications are is that government should be ensuring that early years services ... need to be geared to helping parents develop the skills they need in order to be able to give their kids the best start in life possible."

Download the full *Building Character* report at [www.demos.co.uk/publications/parenting](http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/parenting).

Taken directly from  
BC Council for Families website at [www.bccf.ca](http://www.bccf.ca).

## RELATED LINKS

Effects of Piano, Singing, and Rhythm Instruction on the Spatial Reasoning of At-Risk Children  
[www.uwosh.edu/departments/psychology/rauscher/Rauscher%20Escom5.pdf](http://www.uwosh.edu/departments/psychology/rauscher/Rauscher%20Escom5.pdf)

Research on how music promotes learning  
[www.songsforteaching.com/references.htm](http://www.songsforteaching.com/references.htm)

Ideas and suggestions on how music increases math, literacy and social-emotional development in toddlers and preschoolers  
[www.kindermusik.com/Classes/ClassesBenefits.aspx](http://www.kindermusik.com/Classes/ClassesBenefits.aspx)

Benefits of Music for Children with Special Needs: Tips for Parents and Educators  
[www.ucp.org/ucp\\_channel/doc.cfm/1/16/98/98-98/5093](http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel/doc.cfm/1/16/98/98-98/5093)

Books suggestions on using music in teaching  
[www.songsforteaching.com/resources/books.htm](http://www.songsforteaching.com/resources/books.htm)

American Music Therapy Association  
[www.musictherapy.org/faqs.html](http://www.musictherapy.org/faqs.html)



*Don't worry that children never listen to you;  
worry that they are always watching you.*

**Robert Fulghum**

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# LOW OR NO COST FAMILY FUN

## Snowflake Fantasy

Celebrate the season with your family at the John Janzen Nature Centre. Learn about the wonder of snowflakes with hands on science activities. Inside the centre, enjoy harp music, face painting, creatures from the valley zoo and snowflake crafts . Outdoor activities include snowshoeing, the cooperative ski and marshmallow roasting on the bonfire.

Date: Sunday, December 13, 2009  
1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.

Location: John Janzen Nature Centre  
7000-143 Street, Edmonton  
(Whitemud Drive and Fox Drive)

Cost: \$6.00/family

For more information call 780-495-2910 or visit the City of Edmonton website at [www.edmonton.ca/attractions\\_recreation](http://www.edmonton.ca/attractions_recreation).



## Breakfast with Santa

Santa and Mrs. Claus are stopping in to Bon Accord. Come join them for a continental breakfast and a visit!

Date: Saturday, December 12, 2009  
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Location: Bon Accord Community Hall  
4931-50 Avenue, Bon Accord

Cost: Free

For more information call 780-921-3550 or visit the website at [www.town.bonaccord.ab.ca](http://www.town.bonaccord.ab.ca).

## Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Party

Join in on the annual gingerbread house decorating party at the Fort Saskatchewan Public Library. This event is for children age 12 and under. Bring your creativity and your family down to the library and build a candy covered house for the holidays!

Date: Saturday, December 12, 2009  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Location: 10011-102 Street,  
Fort Saskatchewan

Cost: Free

Registration is required. Please call 780-998-4275 for more information.



## New Years Eve in Sherwood Park

Bid farewell to 2009 and welcome in the new year at a fun-filled family festival at in Sherwood Park. Join in the fun with a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities including:

- indoor/outdoor skating
- Ice sculptures and ice slide
- fire dancers
- petting zoo
- black light activities
- gymnastics
- campfire cooking & activities
- fireworks
- snowshoeing
- sleigh rides
- snow sculptures
- snow painting and much more...

Date: Thursday, December 31, 2009  
4:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

Location: Broadmoor Lake Park  
2025 Oak Street  
Sherwood Park

Cost: Free

For more information visit the website [www.strathcona.ab.ca](http://www.strathcona.ab.ca).

## Speech and Language Development Workshop

Parents of children (ages 0-5) can come learn about their child's speech development and get some great tips on how to promote it. This session is presented by an Alberta Health Services' speech-language pathologist. You are welcome to bring your children. Combine this session with an entire morning exploring the library and reading to your little one.

Date: Thursday, December 10, 2009  
10:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m.

Location: Edmonton Public Library, Londonderry Branch  
110 Londonderry Mall, 137 Avenue and 66 Street

Cost: Free

Register on-line, in person or by calling 780-496-1814.

# DID YOU KNOW...

## 2.1 Million Cribs Were Recalled in November

More than 2.1 million drop-side cribs by Stork Craft Manufacturing have recently been recalled, the biggest crib recall in history. The Consumer Product Safety Commission says the recall affects almost 1 million cribs sold in Canada.

The recall includes products with manufacture and distribution dates between January 1993 and October 2009. Stork Craft drop-side cribs have a side that moves up and down to allow parents to lift children from the cribs more easily. The cribs have had problems with their hardware, which can break, or with assembly mistakes by the crib owner.

The danger is that a child's head can get caught between the mattress and the side railing, if it separates from the crib. The agency is aware of four deaths of young children who suffocated in their cribs.

For full recall information visit the Health Canada website at [cpsr-rspc.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://cpsr-rspc.hc-sc.gc.ca). Please pass this information on to your clients.

## Family Meals Make a Difference

A study by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found several preventative benefits to families who eat meals together on a regular basis. *The Importance of Family Dinners V* is a new report that explores the links between the frequency of family dinners and teens' substance use, their access to substances, their relationship with their parents, and the signals they receive from their parents about substance use. Also included in the report is a study of the quality of dinners teens are having with their parents, and the impact of distractions such as cell phones and other electronic devices at the table.

The end message for parents is clear; set a nightly dinner date with your kids. Let them know how important they are to you. Listen to what they have to say.

Download a copy of the 17 page report at no cost from [www.casacolumbia.org](http://www.casacolumbia.org).

***"One can say everything best over a meal."***

**George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans)**



*"Working together for our children's future."*

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This newsletter is researched and produced by Nicole Vogel, Communication Consultant, ECDSS. We welcome your comments and suggestions, including research findings, fundraisers, events, resource connections, site visits, etc.

Please contact Nicole at [nmv@shaw.ca](mailto:nmv@shaw.ca) with any suggestions.

## Resources

Orff Society UK, Nurturing Creativity Through Music [Online] Available [www.orff.org.uk/approach.cfm](http://www.orff.org.uk/approach.cfm), November 2009.

American Music Therapy Association. Music Therapy Makes a Difference [Online] Available [www.musictherapy.org](http://www.musictherapy.org), November 2009.

The National Association on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. The Importance of Family Dinners V [Online] Available [www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/380-Importance%20of%20Family%20Dinners%20V.pdf](http://www.casacolumbia.org/absolutenm/articlefiles/380-Importance%20of%20Family%20Dinners%20V.pdf), September 2009.



**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.