

In this issue: Planning Outreach, A Tree For All Seasons, Winter Blues, Meet Chini & more!



*Issue Two
Winter 2002*

G

ROWING TOGETHER

NEWS & RESOURCES FOR THE BC FIRST NATIONS HEAD START ON-RESERVE PROGRAM

BC FIRST NATIONS HEAD START

One Hundred Percent Parental Involvement!



SKIDEGATE PARENT WANDA PEARSON AND HER SON CAMERON



*sharing
our
successes*

SKIDEGATE IS A SMALL, ISOLATED COMMUNITY of over 600 people on beautiful Haida Gwaii in the Queen Charlotte Islands in northwestern B.C.

Something that makes Skidegate's Head Start very special is the strong social network and support it provides for parents—this

Head Start is a 100% parental involvement program. All programming is parent-and-child. Open four days a week from 9:30-2:00, many faithful moms and their children participate everyday; others come whenever they can.

On a typical day, some parents might phone needing a ride; they are picked up. As families

Continued on back page



Head Start components in practice

Editor's pen

Welcome to the second issue of **your** newsletter! To make this newsletter work as a way for projects to communicate with one another, we need you.

Please let us know if you have discovered a new curriculum idea, funding source, or program idea. Or share a success story. Or let us know if you are struggling with some aspect of the program or have a question that someone else might be able to answer. Tell us about yourselves, and about your co-workers. We can learn so much from hearing others' ideas and from learning of successes and challenges others are having.

Special thanks to those who contributed to this issue:

Ramona Baxter (Lytton)
Janina Fleming (Skidegate)
Joan Gignac (Ladysmith)
Shannon Grant (Cape Mudge)
Andrea McLellan (Lillooet)
Beverley Parnell (Skidegate)
Brenda Paull (Sechelt)

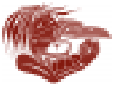
We would love to hear from you!

Deadline for next issue: January 15, 2002

We like to have photos to accompany any content you provide. There are specific requirements for photo submissions. Please contact the editor before sending anything or we may be unable to use your submission.

Tel: (250) 499-8804

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Please recycle!

Language and Culture

THE SYAYK̄W HEAD START PROGRAM IN SECHELT, B.C. was busy this past year **rediscovering the making of traditional regalia**. The parents and teachers set out to make 'Paddle Vests' for their children's Potlatch and Graduation Ceremonies. Materials were bought, colors were picked, and parents and teachers got busy sewing together.

"Then we hit some snags with the designs and colors. We called an emergency meeting with our elders and we asked them for direction of how we should design, make them and what colors we were to use. The elders were happy to see the parents' interest in making our own regalia. They understood and knew we were just re-learning what we had forgotten. "This is still new to us," our elders said. "All the other native communities also know we are aware of this. They will understand that we are just re-learning." With that said and done, they gave us permission to continue on with how we started."

We all learned an important lesson and will research our cultural history for future reference and we will continue to ask our elders for their guidance. We have also started archiving our meetings with our elders on videotape.

Brenda Paull, Syayk̄w Head Start Program Coordinator

Education

PROMOTING LITERACY can be a fun way of integrating some school readiness skills into your program.

At the Cape Mudge Head Start Program, **literacy is integrated into every aspect of the education programs**. "We have created beautiful books with the children's photographs and simple 'readable' words as well as a great many games and songs. On the walls we have the Kwakwala alphabet as well as the English alphabet. We have the children's name tags posted with magnets or velcro in all centres within the program (for easy removal and replacement) for the children to use in printing, singing, rhyming, playing games, and reading."



(CAPE MUDGE) KATHERINE ASSU IN FRONT OF THE BOOK BAGS

"We have also established a **Book Bag Club**. At the beginning of each year, a child is given a book bag to take home daily. Every morning the children come in and sign out a book from our program. They then take it home and read it with their family." Family



members initial a note attached to the bag and the children bring the book back. Children receive reading awards once they have read 18 books.

They [parents and children] all really enjoy it. It's a time they put aside to do reading with their children. They really see it in the children. We have three-year-old children who know the names of all the other children in the class.

Shannon Grant, Head Start ECE Supervisor

Parent Involvement

EDITH SMITH, MOTHER OF DONAVON AND LORETTA DIXON who attend the Syaykw Head Start in Sechelt, **shares her spirituality** with the children, who thoroughly enjoy participating in smudging.



EDITH SMITH SMUDGING WITH HER SON DONOVAN . DONOVAN SAYS: "THANK YOU FOR GIVING US A WONDERFUL AND SPECIAL GIFT."

Social Support

IN ORDER TO DELIVER AN OUTREACH PROGRAM, the T'it'q'et administration had to first **build community capacity by offering certified training for its workers**. After investigating different training opportunities, it was found that there was a gap in training services for Outreach Program Workers in B.C., especially for programs targetting children in the 0-3 age bracket.

To remedy this, the T'it'q'et administration sent two Head Start workers to attend a "Invest in Kids" facilitators training session (www.investinkids.com). They then came back as trained facilitators with the skills necessary to train and certify other "Home Visitors".

Their first task in sharing the "Home Visitor" training was to organize a five-day "Invest in Kids" workshop where they would have a chance to train other people in their community. This was a great opportunity for local program staff (Head Start, IDP, Social Development, Daycare, CHRs, CHNs, and preschool workers) to train and network. Approximately half of the workshop attendees were from the Lillooet area and others from all parts of B.C.

This training has promoted new collaborations and will enhance current linkages with community services. We hope to have our Outreach running in the New Year.

Andrea McLellan, Head Start Program Manager

nutrition TIP

Fruit drinks, beverages, cocktails and punches are not 100% fruit juice. These have sugar added. **Look for the words "100% fruit juice" on labels.**

If you **freeze juice boxes** or water bottles the night before, they will be cool and defrosted by lunch. Having the frozen juice box tucked into the lunch bag will help prevent bacteria—which can cause food poisoning—from growing in the other part of the lunch (meat, eggs, past and mayonnaise items).

Head Start components

- 1 Culture & Language
- 2 Education
- 3 Health Promotion
- 4 Nutrition
- 5 Parent & Family Involvement
- 6 Social Support





*journeying
through
challenges*

Developing Outreach Programs

DEVELOPING A FULLY FUNCTIONING HEAD START PROGRAM TAKES TIME. Much creativity, hard work and resources go into just getting a program operational. Many communities are doing amazing work overall, but only a handful of communities have been incorporating outreach in their programming.

For whatever reason, there will always be a number of children and families in the community who do not access centre-based services. These may include at-risk children and families who would most benefit from Head Start. This gap area presents a challenge.

When thinking about outreach and your community and its Head Start program, some questions to ask are:

- Is there a need to reach children who aren't accessing centre programs?
- Are there too few children in the community to offer a centre-based program? (usually minimum of 10)
- Is the community widely scattered over large geographical distances, and are there transportation difficulties?
- Does the community have facilities for centre-based programming? (Outreach can be an excellent alternative if there is a lack of suitable facilities)
- Are parents and families able to be involved in a centre-based program? (seasonal employment can impact participation)
- Is there a large population of young parents or parents with large families or elderly caregivers who find it difficult to leave the home?

In August each year, Nzenman Family Services in Lytton, B.C. looks at band lists to identify prospective outreach families. "Then we do an introductory package to all of those children that we identify who aren't going to daycare or aren't in a preschool program. We

focus on these children and set up initial home visits and introduce the program to parents."

"One of the biggest challenges for the home-based programs is the lack of social interaction with other children. We all know that's how children learn—through playing. In the home visiting, that's what may be

An Outreach Program is a way to bring support and the six components of Head Start early childhood education to children and families who are not attending programs at the Head Start centre.

lacking, so we do group sessions every two weeks and invite the parents and children to come. We do all sorts of fun activities like circle time, snack, making different health information available."

"We get a lot of compliments from parents and grand-parents. When the staff are out doing their home-visits, the kids are so excited and feel so special. They say, "My teacher comes to my house." Basically, if we weren't doing an Outreach Program, those kids wouldn't have any access to early childhood programs. We are able to offer that choice to parents."

Outreach can complement centre-based Head Start programs or it can be set up as a its own stand-alone program. Depending on community size and need, outreach can range from part-time to full-time services. Some outreach activities could include play group, Mother Goose, theme boxes and educational resources for lending, recreation activities, and more.

For more information on setting up a Head Start Outreach, see "Guidelines for Models of Delivery" by Rona Sterling-Collins. Copies of this report went to every Head Start Project in April 2002. The 2000-2001 Site Reviews are another source for outreach ideas.

Contact: Kelly Terbasket, BCFNHS Program Consultant
Tel: (250) 499-8804

If you have had success with an outreach idea, please share it with us!



(LYTTON) HOME VISIT WITH DYLAN



Head Start Staff

Herb Jones



"CHINI"—HAIDA LANGUAGE TEACHER AND COOK EXTRAORDINAIRE!

Children. The most precious resource a village has, therefore we must care for them. First of all teach "LOVE", and right from wrong. Teach "RESPECT" by being respectful ourselves.

When Skidegate Head Start parents are asked to describe Herb Jones—"Chini"—the same replies come up. He is thoughtful, caring, seems to know when you are down and asks what's wrong. He shares his experiences and stories of raising his six children. He is so very patient.

Chini was a logger for 20 years. He then worked in the management area for 22 years and while in management sat on the committee of the employee family assistance program (EFAP). He has been married for 43 wonderful years and has 15 grandchildren, soon to be 16 as of January 2003.

Five years ago Chini started teaching Haida to children. He began working for Skidegate Head Start at its very beginning three years ago and is

now language teacher, cook, driver and so many more things to the parents and children of the program.

Chini greets children and parents each day and talks to them throughout the day in Haida. He also has a wonderful singing voice that he shares; he loves to sing the real oldies! One of Chini's daughters is the supervisor of the daycare.

Herb's name was recently put forward for the Head Start Regional Advisory Council (RAC) and he said he would take part as long as it was beneficial for the other members and for the Skidegate program. This is his second term and he is doing a wonderful job as an RAC member—he is very involved with the conferences and enjoys meeting people from all the different programs.

Position:
Language Teacher, Cook, Driver

Project:
Skidegate Head Start Program

Location:
Skidegate, B.C.

*inside
Head Start*



(SKIDEGATE) HUNTER, GABRIEL AND BABY KAYCEE



Curriculum ideas

A TREE FOR ALL SEASONS

Trees are beautiful reminders of the cycle of the seasons. In the spring we see buds and flowers, summer brings leaves, in the fall come brilliant colors and sometimes fruit, and in the winter we see the outlines of the branches.

What better a way to talk about the seasons than to build your own tree? This can be a month-long project which can involve parents as well. The idea is to build a fairly life-sized tree for your classroom area. It could be propped in a corner or placed as a central attraction.

This project sounds complicated but it really isn't once you get started.

Materials

one large plastic tarp
 one roll of chicken wire
 flour
 water
 large container for mixing paper mache
 pail or other large container filled with rocks (to support tree trunk)
 newspaper (lots of it)

The Aboriginal HIPPY program

(Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) is a **family literacy program** set to launch in British Columbia in January 2003.

The program is home-based and works with children aged 3 to 5. The program takes only 15 minutes a day and runs for 30 weeks. Parents also attend biweekly meetings and monthly events.

The Chief Dan George Centre for Advanced Education has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with HIPPY Canada to bring this internationally recognized program to First Nations communities and Aboriginal organizations in BC and across Canada.

The HIPPY program was originally developed in Israel in 1969 and since that time has been launched in over seven countries. Several studies and long term assessments show the success of the program in preparing preschool children for further educational success.

The HIPPY program is also a family literacy program: a Home Visitor comes to the home every week and goes through the new curriculum with the parent. We teach the parent how to teach their children, and we help the parent become more involved in their child's education. This is an empowering program that will help both children and parents.

Every family in the program receives an Aboriginal HIPPY bent box filled with HIPPY curriculum, Aboriginal children's storybooks, and other supplies. This material remains in the home with the family, even after the completion of the program.

If you would like more information on Aboriginal HIPPY, please contact:

Sasha Hobbs, Associate Director, Chief Dan George Centre for Advanced Education
Tel: (604) 291-5139



(LADYSMITH) CLYDE AND GARRET STAND PROUDLY BY THE TREE THEY HELPED TO MAKE.

DIRECTIONS

Cover the floor area with the tarp.
 Very important!

Make the tree trunk

1. Cut a piece of chicken wire about 6 feet long and 3 feet wide.
2. Form it into a long tube shape to represent the tree trunk.
3. Tie it together with string. The children can help with this part.
4. Stuff the center of the chicken wire roll with rolled-up newspaper to strengthen it.
5. Stand it upright on something like a pail full of rocks to keep it stable.

Cover the tree trunk with bark

You are going to cover the wire with the paper mache. This is where it gets messy and the children have the most fun!

1. Mix water and flour into a large pan, until you have a soupy paste.
2. Have the children rip up pieces of newspaper and soak them in the paste.
3. Apply the paper (which has been soaked in paste) onto the chicken wire. It doesn't have to be smooth but it needs to cover the wire completely. You will have to wait for layers to dry before applying the next layer. Applying the paper to the trunk could be a two- or three-day project.
4. Once you have covered it as much as you want, let it dry.

Make the branches

While you are waiting for the trunk to dry, make the branches.

1. Roll four or five pieces of chicken wire into long tubes about the diameter of an adult's arm. (The chicken wire tubes can also be bent to look more like branches.)
2. You can add small branches at the ends if you feel creative.
3. Tape newspaper over the branches.
4. Cover the newspaper with wet paper mache (like you did for the trunk) and let it dry.

Put on finishing touches

In about a week, when the tree is completely dry, use rollers and large paint brushes to paint the trunk and branches. Once everything is painted, attach the branches.

Then depending on the season, add blossoms, leaves, fruit or autumn-colored leaves, and in winter—cotton for snow. A squirrel could live in your tree, an eagle could have a nest there. The possibilities are endless!

BEATING THE WINTER BLUES...

DOES YOUR HEAD START HAVE LOW ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION IN THE WINTER?

Since opening in 1999, we have noticed a pattern in our attendance and participation throughout each year. Typically, we are full from April – October, but from November to March we are wondering if our families have hibernated for the winter.

Winter weather and unsafe travelling conditions are reason enough for families to stay home, and the higher incidence of illness in the winter months often keeps both children and staff away. In some areas of the province, winter is the season for cultural cleansing, gatherings and activities, and these activities are sometimes not conducive to the typical Head Start schedule.

Because much of our funding is based on service needs and attendance records, we have developed some creative strategies for altering our service and also seeking out hibernating families.

- Although illnesses are hard to avoid, adopting a **wellness policy** that identifies symptoms and when children and staff can return after illness helps to keep germs away.
- **Disinfect**, disinfect, disinfect! Often these seasonal illnesses are contagious, so do all you can to keep a healthy play environment. By cleaning toys, surfaces, telephones, and door knobs you are creating a clean, germ-free play space.
- **Plan evening and lunch-time family dinners** to draw families back into routine (food always brings a crowd!). Ask parents to help with the cooking; this gets more family involvement in the event.
- **Incorporate seasonal cultural activities** into programming.

Winter brings with it darkness and cold that sometimes keeps people at home and indoors. Spice up your program by straying from the ordinary. This adds surprise and anticipation to the children's experience. They get excited wondering what will happen next and looking forward to the unknown. Try some of these ideas:

- **“Pyjama Day”**. Everyone—staff, parents and children—comes to Head Start wearing pyjamas! The silliness puts a smile on everyone's face and surprises drop-in visitors.
- Other variations include: “Backwards Day”, “Colour Day”, “Bring a Friend Day”, “Bring a Grandparent Day”, “Wintertime Beach Party”, etc. Use your imagination!
- Go on **field trips** to common places where you will see parents and other family members, and bring a snack to share with the people you see.
- **Bake treats** and take them to Elders.
- Host a **winter carnival** and get everyone involved.
- **Keep regular contact with families** either by telephone or by home visits. It helps to touch base and keep families aware of Head Start events. Sometimes these gentle reminders are all it takes to bring families back on board; they make families feel wanted and appreciated.

submitted by:
Joan Gignac
Child Care Manager, Nutsuma Lelum Child Care Centre
Chemainus First Nation, Ladysmith, Vancouver Island



(ENDERBY) MOESHA

Snowflake Mobiles

(3 – 5 year-olds)

Materials:

lightweight white paper
scissors
hole punch
glitter powder
wire clothes hangers
glue
yarn

Pre-cut paper into 4-inch squares (otherwise the snowflakes will be too big for your mobile).

Fold the paper the paper in half twice. Use scissors to round off the corners of the paper (this will create a circle when unfolded).

With scissors and/or hole punch, cut and punch out patterns in the folded paper to create your snowflake design.

Open the finished snowflake. Cover with glue and then sprinkle glittery powder. Let dry.

Paste several snowflakes to a length of yarn. Tie yarn to a clothes hanger to make a mobile.



100% Parental Involvement, continued from cover

arrive, Elder Herb Jones greets them in Haida. The morning starts in a relaxed way, with parents and staff sharing coffee and chatting or getting some breakfast, while children enjoy free play. Later in the morning, everyone joins in a group Circle Time for singing, reading,



KARLENE AND BABY KAYCEE

storytelling, etc. Parents work with Herb to plan and prepare the daily lunch, and on Mondays one of the moms bakes home-made bread. Activities throughout the week include a literacy and parenting skills program, a weekly prenatal program for pregnant women or women with babies under the age of one or who are breastfeeding (run as a partnership between Head Start and the Health Centre), and a preventative dental care partnership with UBC.

Many of the parents, who would ordinarily be at home alone with their children, now have the opportunity to learn their native language with their children, gain confidence with parenting abilities through workshops (on topics like behaviour and discipline, mental health and first aid) learn new skills such as sewing a quilt or planting a vegetable garden, and improve their knowledge of preparing

We didn't know what to expect, but right from the beginning, parents and their children kept coming back day after day.

nutritious meals. And they socialize with other parents, many of whom they might not normally form friendships with because of social standing or other differences. This helps build personal networks of support.

Skidegate parents are extremely pleased with their program. They work together with Head Start staff, asking questions and offering suggestions which guide decisions about programming. Knowing that their children are playing and learning in a safe, nurturing environment where they will have a nutritious meal, the parents too are able to nurture themselves and grow as adults.

CALENDAR

January 8

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Workshops:

Big Book. Vancouver. Create & take a "Big Book" to use within your child care program.

\$15 for members, \$20 for non-members.

Pre-registration required.

Contact Essie Wolf at (604) 325-7576

Fax: (604) 709-5662

E-mail: ccris@wstcoast.org

January 13 - 17

Head Start Regional Training Session (Vancouver).

Coordinated by BC Child Care Society.

Some sessions may be open to delegates who are not affiliated with Head Start.

For more information, call Lisa: (604) 990-9939

January 18 - 22

Head Start Regional Training Session (Kamloops).

See contact info for January 13-17 session (above).

February 4 - 8

Head Start Regional Training Session (Nanaimo).

See contact info for January 13-17 session (above).

February 13

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Workshops:

"Burnout in ECE – 'Been There Done That'" with

Heather Briese. Vancouver. Pre-registration required.

See January 8 event listing for contact info.

February 20 - 21

Heart of the Matter: Working with First Nations Children, Youth, Families and Communities.

Duncan, B.C. Conference presented by Malaspina University College, Child and Youth Care First Nations Program. For more information:

<http://web.mala.bc.ca/cycfncon>

Tel: (250) 746-3500

March 11

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Workshops:

Make & Take Felt Stories. Vancouver. Pre-registration

required. See January 8 event listing for contact info.

April 14

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Workshops:

"Language" with Robyn Church. Vancouver.

How children acquire language, the typical stages of language development, and how we as early childhood educators can support children's language development.

Pre-registration required. See January 8 for contact info.

