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# RROWING TOGETHER

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

## BC FIRST NATIONS HEAD START

### Healthy Snack Basket

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RAVEN, KYLE & ELISHA  
(OSOYOOS)



**T**HIS PAST YEAR AT THE OSOYOOS INDIAN BAND HEAD START, we decided to start a Healthy Snack Basket in the classroom to help save costs to our snack program. In the morning, the children sort their back packs before coming into the classroom—homework bags in the homework bin, healthy snacks for sharing in the snack basket. This has been a great way of teaching the children to identify healthy

foods in their lunches, and it also helps to cut down on the amount of wasted food in the classroom. One of the reasons we wanted to have some sort of a change in our snack program was because we were noticing a huge amount of waste of expensive fruits and vegetables at lunch time—children often don't eat a full piece of fruit after a meal.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





KEIFER, BRANDON,  
JAKOB, CHLOE, ALISHA,  
RAVEN, CAITLYNNE



HEALTHY SNACK BASKET, CONTINUED FROM COVER

Usually, families will send in a piece of fruit that we cut up for sharing at morning snack time. However, some families do choose to send in bulk for the week like a bag of carrots or a whole watermelon or a container of yogurt. Not only has this program really helped with teaching social skills like sharing to the children, but there is an abundance of food for sharing throughout the entire day. Children who do not have enough to eat know they can access the basket any time they want! Plus if a family does not have any healthy food in the home for the day, there is always a lot to share so parents know that when they send their child to school their child will have healthy snacks throughout the day to enjoy.

Besides budgetary reasons, the concept behind the snack basket has increased parent involvement and responsibility to provide healthy snack choices for their children without it being an onerous task!

Julie Millward  
Coordinator, Osoyoos Indian Band Head Start

## *nutrition* TIP

We all need **calcium** to help bones and teeth grow and stay strong. Sources of calcium include **milk, yogurt, cheese, canned salmon with the bones mashed in, dried seaweed and dark green veggies, like broccoli and kale.**

## A Bunny Hole!

**S**NCECMA'LATEN (UPPER NICOLA) HEAD START HAS CREATED A GETAWAY SPOT FOR CHILDREN—a small teepee set up in the corner of the room, made comfy with a sleeping mat, a blanket and some pillows. “This is a space for a child to go to when he/she needs to be alone. It is not a time out; a child is never



MACK  
IN THE  
BUNNY  
HOLE

sent there. It is their decision to go into the bunny hole. They come back out when they are ready to join the others. All other children are asked to respect someone's decision to be alone and not to bother them if they have chosen to be by themselves. The child does not have to ask permission to use the bunny hole. When the flaps on the teepee are closed everyone knows someone is in there.

This has been a great success; the children love having the option of going off by themselves. For some children the overstimulation of the day and the activities is too much for them; this spot gives them a chance to get away and recharge.

Brenda Gustafson,  
Director, Upper Nicola Head Start



## Nov 20, 2004 National Child Day

A day to remember that children need love and respect to grow to their full potential. It's a day to marvel at their uniqueness and all they have to offer. It's a day to celebrate the family and think about how adults affect the development of children close to them.

### Activity Idea

Invite family members, including grandparents, to join you on National Child Day and ask them to bring pictures of themselves as babies or young children.

Invite everyone to try to "match up" the names and faces. Once the pictures and names have been matched, ask each person to tell a short story about the picture and what memories of childhood it evokes.

## Videotape a day in the life of your Head Start

**I**F YOU HAVE A VIDEO CAMERA, WHY NOT VIDEOTAPE A DAY IN THE LIFE OF YOUR PROGRAM?

It might be too much to do all your taping in a single day, so do a little all throughout one week. Be creative! Have fun!

A video is a nice way to celebrate the beginning or end of the year; invite families to an informal get-together like a lunch, where they can view the video with their children (who will love seeing themselves!) You can also use your video to introduce your program to new families, or show it to your partners or your funders.



SAKWUWA  
(ENDERBY)

## Head Start components

1 **Culture & Language**

2 **Education**

3 **Health Promotion**

4 **Nutrition**

5 **Parent & Family Involvement**

6 **Social Support**





# S I T E P R O F I L E

## Thluchen Children's Centre

*Tla-o-quiaht First Nation's Head Start programs serve two communities on the beautiful west coast of Vancouver Island: Esowista Reserve (Long Beach area) and Opitsaht (near Tofino, on Meares Island).*

**Band:** Tla-o-quiaht First Nation

**Location:** Vancouver Island Region.

Serving Esowista Reserve and Opitsaht; combined population approx. 350

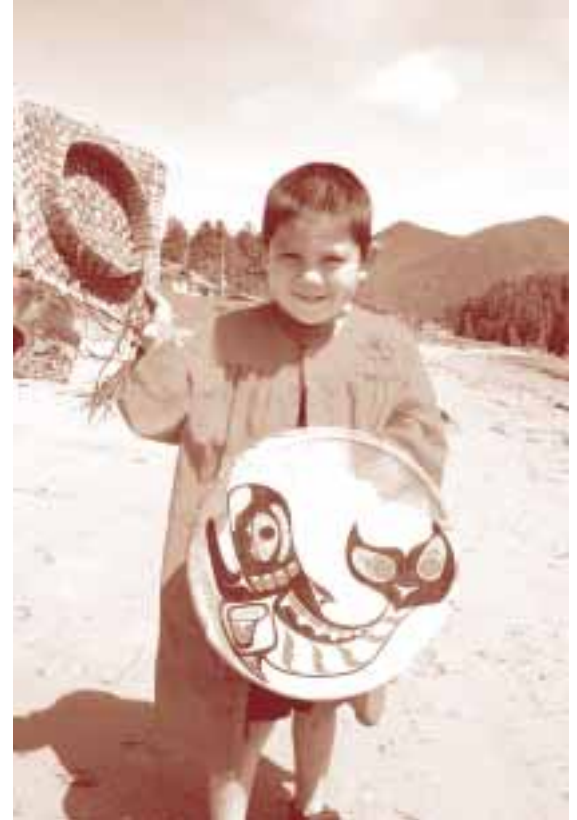
**Model:** pre-school enhancement

**Programs offered:** morning program, afternoon pre-school, outreach, toddler drop-in

**Staff:** (5) coordinator, three preschool teachers, outreach worker

**First funded:** 2001

**Administered by:** Tla-o-quiaht First Nation band office



TJ IN HIS PRESCHOOL GRADUATION GOWN

**W**E HAVE HAD A PRESCHOOL PROGRAM HERE FOR OVER 20 YEARS. Previously, it was only a preschool for 4-year-olds. Now our program reaches from 0 – 6 years. We live in a rainforest and serve two different communities. This can be a challenge. Sometimes in the heavy rain our attendance is lower. Staff have travel time. Sometimes the outreach worker has to carry lending bins from one site to another, including a boat ride, often in the pouring rain.

There is a health nurse who works here two days a week. A speech therapist comes to

the local school in Tofino. We do go to Nanaimo for hearing tests for our four-year-olds; it's about a 2-hour drive.

On the Esowista Head Start (10 miles from Tofino) we have a morning and afternoon program for the 2 ½ to 6-year-olds. On the Opitsaht program (on Meares Island, accessible by boat from Tofino) we have an afternoon preschool program. We are two communities and we try to bring that issue up to our funders because usually we only qualify for one funding to serve two different programs and two different communities. Each community is unique



and diverse. In Esowista, we rent the basement of a house where we have our licensed child care facility. On Meares Island, it is at the band office and it's an unlicensed preschool program for 3 and 4-year-olds depending on demographics. An exciting thing for us is we have received funding through the Nuuchahnulth Training Board to finalize our goal of a building purchase. We have purchased a house from a homeowner on the Esowista reserve, and we are lucky in our timing that houses on the reserve are up for renovation, so our house will be renovated, too. Hopefully, we will be able to move in by the middle of September.

Carol Martin is our full-time coordinator. Grace George is our half-time pre-school teacher. She works in the afternoons at the Esowista program. Gail Hayes does the morning pre-school at Esowista and in the afternoon she travels to Meares Island to do the afternoon program. She has to drive to Tofino, wait for the boat to the island, go on a 5-minute boat ride, then walk to the other program. Right now we have Angela Williams also working with us as a sub, because Gail broke her ankle about a month ago. Angela is from our community, and has applied to take the ECE program at North Island College in Port Alberni in September.

With our outreach program, we wanted to reach as many children as possible before they entered the group care and Head Start program. Catherine Frank is our outreach worker. She works in both communities, 20 hours a week, doing home visits, home support and resource lending. We do a home visit and tell the parents what the program is about and if they are interested then they fill out a form. They do self-referral to our program. If a child comes to preschool and the parents feel the child needs more help at home, then we would visit them with our outreach program.

A home visit varies from ½ hour to an hour, depending on child or parent needs. We let community members know what we are doing by doing articles in our community newsletter. We do preschool news for parents and include pictures of babies from



(L - R) ISIAH, RICKI, BENNY, AMY AND TEACHER GAIL HAYES

our outreach home visits and share news about our outreach. The outreach worker also started toddler-drop-ins once a week. Right now she is working with the Nuuchahnulth infant development worker and they are doing infant massage with babies in our communities.

We have a lending bin program and we develop our own curriculum and themes for the bins. We have taken Mother Goose training and other outreach training and taken what was relevant for our community and adapted it to our needs. Some of the grandmas have told us that they read to their grandchild and that the dads are reading. With the community that we have, we try to get more books there. The kids really like it.

As staff, we enjoy working together. We enjoy just being with the children—to watch them, their growth, their development. The principal talked to us and said how more prepared the children are when they enter kindergarten, knowing colours, fine motor, counting, spelling, etc. We have some parents who are asking us to have a kindergarten so they can keep their kids with us.



THE RECENTLY PURCHASED HOUSE IN ESOWISTA



HAILEY IN HER PRESCHOOL GRADUATION GOWN





# Training First Nations ECEs for our programs

Seabird Island Band wanted to provide an Early Childhood Education Program which would be culturally relevant, socially sensitive and blended with the mainstream curriculum.

SEABIRD ISLAND is a First Nation with an elected Council of one Chief and six councillors. Located in the Eastern Fraser Valley, Seabird Island is one of the Sto:lo Nation's largest communities and is centrally located to eight First Nations communities in the region. The total community population is 702 people, comprised of registered members, non-registered, non-native and registered members from other First Nation communities.

Seabird Island is fortunate to have a First Nation Aboriginal Head Start Program, a Licensed Preschool Program and a Daycare Program. We are also currently involved in a Pilot Project for an Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program.

Over the past five years we have all witnessed an increase in the number of programs and services offered to First Nations children. Many of our communities have daycares, Head Start Programs and preschool programs. What has quickly become apparent was that there was a lack of certified First Nations Early Childhood Educators in all these program areas.

In an effort to promote post secondary education, and increase the number of First Nation's child care professionals, the Seabird Island Band wanted to provide an

Early Childhood Education Program which would be culturally relevant, socially sensitive and blended with the mainstream curriculum.

The Seabird Island First Nation submitted a proposal to the Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP—offered through First Nations Education Steering Committee) in January of 2002. Our proposal was accepted.

With the support of ISSP funding and partial funding from the Sto:lo Nation Human Resources Development, Seabird Island Band hosted a Family Childcare Certificate Program, through a brokered agreement and partnership with the University College of the Fraser Valley.

We wanted to start with the Family Childcare Certificate Program because it is a part-time program and students who completed the certificate program could earn 6 credits toward an Early Childhood Education Certificate. It was a way of gradually introducing students into a college course and thereby increases the student's chances of success. Some of our students had not completed high school and many had not been in a classroom in a long time, and most had not attended any post secondary courses.

There were 26 students enrolled in this course, the youngest having just graduated from high school and we even had elders





attending as students! These students represented 13 Bands within the Sto:lo Nation and other territories.

Students attended classes every Wednesday evening and Saturday from August to December 2002. The mainstream curriculum was integrated with Sto:lo culture and Halq'emeylem language. Elders sat in on some of the classes and participated in monthly Cultural Advisory Circle meetings, which the instructors attended.

All 26 students who started the program completed the course! A cultural graduation ceremony was held on December 18, 2002. There were over 200 chiefs, counselors, education managers, friends and family in attendance to celebrate the students' accomplishments.

Once Seabird Island's proposal for the Family Childcare Certificate was approved, we began looking into providing the Early Childhood Education Certificate. We applied for funding to Sto:lo Nation Human Resources Development in March of 2002. Our proposal was accepted! The Early Childhood Education program, also instructed by the University College of the Fraser Valley, began on January 6, 2003. Twenty students who graduated from the Family Childcare Certificate Program entered the Early Childhood Program. Three students joined the class for a total of 23 students.

Although the students faced many challenges and hardships throughout the one-and-a-half year program, they overcame them through supporting each other and through the supports they received from the Seabird Island Early Childhood Education Program. We offered support from a tutor, one-to-one and group sessions with a psychologist, and numerous workshops (on topics like study skills, burn-out and healthy communication). Culture and Language were also a very important aspect of the program and helped to create cohesiveness amongst the students. Students learned Halq'emeylem through games, activities,

songs and prayers. Every day began with a prayer.

Although all 23 students successfully completed the first term, one student decided not to continue into the second term. In term two, one student successfully completed all but one course, and could not continue into the third term. In the third term, one student had to withdraw because of family health issues. Another student successfully completed all but one course, which she will be picking up in the fall. One other student has successfully completed all the ECE courses but is required to take the Family Childcare Certificate Program. So, out of the 23 students who started the program, 18 successfully graduated.

A graduation ceremony was held on April 30. Three hundred family members, friends, First Nations representatives from participating Bands and UCFV faculty and the Dean were in attendance to watch the 18 graduates receive their certificates. It was a wonderful way to end a journey that began two years ago!

**Extra Note:**

There are currently 17 students enrolled in our second session of the Family Childcare Certificate Program which started April 14, 2004.

Candace Robotham  
Coordinator, Seabird Island Head Start

Candace is happy to speak with anyone who wants to hear more about Seabird Island's experience in setting up their childcare certificate program.

Tel (604) 796-2177, ext. 317  
Fax (604) 796-3729  
E-mail: [candacerobotham@seabirdisland.ca](mailto:candacerobotham@seabirdisland.ca)

**For more information on how you might set up a similar program, contact the *Indian Studies Support Program (ISSP)*.**

ISSP provides funding to promote access to quality First Nations Post-Secondary learning programs for First Nations learners.

Any First Nations Band, Tribal Council, organization, or First Nations Post-secondary Institute located in British Columbia may apply for ISSP funding.

The ISSP Committee reviews all funding applications, and makes recommendations to the Department of Indian Affairs about the allocation of ISSP funding.

Ask for the Proposal Guidelines and the Handbook for 2005/06. Proposals are usually due in January, but check with ISSP to be sure.

The ISSP Guidelines and Handbook are available for download online at the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) web site: [www.fnesc.ca/issp](http://www.fnesc.ca/issp)

Or contact FNESC at:  
Ste 113 -100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2  
ISSP program telephone number:  
**(604) 925-6087**



# C U R R I C U L U M

## Get Active!

Share your photos and stories about how your site celebrated National Family Week, and tell us what you do at your Head Start that encourages children, families and staff to stay active and have fun!

For children, regular physical activity is essential for normal, healthy growth and development, and children's physical activity sets positive patterns which promote health and wellness throughout youth and into adulthood.

Consider just a few of the many benefits of regular physical activity:

- May be even more important than milk in bone growth
- Stimulates concentration, heightens memory, and expands problem-solving skills
- Decreases aggressive behaviours
- Enhances academic achievement
- Decreases susceptibility to stress
- Lowers likelihood and levels of smoking and drinking in youth
- Promotes activity and fitness levels into adulthood

## *Healthy Families: Active Together!*

### **October 4 - 10, 2004 is National Family Week.**

This year's theme for National Family Week is *Healthy Families: Active Together!* Here are a few suggestions for encouraging families to get active together:

- Host a **family fun day** in a park or an open space, indoor or outdoors. You could set up stations for different activities, like skipping, 3-leg races, tag, relays, hop-scotch, rope climbing, yoga, martial arts, dancing, roller blading or skateboarding, etc., etc. Use your imagination!
- Host a **family dance class**—anything from square dancing to hip hop!
- Have children **draw pictures of their families being active** together

Adapted from *Family Service Canada* web site:  
[www.familyservicecanada.org](http://www.familyservicecanada.org)



## Jack in the Box

Show children how to curl up into a tiny ball in an imaginary box, then spring up when the lid is lifted. This can be accompanied by singing. Children find this exciting!

## Follow-The-Leader

Young children love to imitate grown-ups! Lead them under, through, off, on, into, up, down and a variety of other actions. Change the rhythm of moving by crawling, walking, or jumping.

## In and Out

Provide a variety of household items to crawl into, out of, and through—such as a box, a laundry basket, a cupboard, a chair, hoop or playhouse.

## Rope

Stretch two ropes along the floor and encourage the child to walk or run between, over and along ropes. Gradually introduce walking along a balance board or balance beam (if you have one). Look for natural balance beams such as fallen logs, sidewalk curbs, etc.

## Size and Shape

Encourage children to learn about “size,” “shape” and “pathways.” Circle arms in small circles and big circles. Walk on tiptoes with small steps, with large steps. Walk in a straight line, a circle or a zig-zag pattern. Lay masking tape on the floor as a pathway and follow it.

## Over and Under

Great activity for a parent-tot group. Children work with a parent. (1) *Adult lies on floor.* Child walks over adult. Reverse roles. (2) *Adult balances on hands and feet,* facing floor. Child crawls under bridge made by adult’s body. Reverse roles! (3) *Adult stands.* Child crawls through adult’s legs. Adult’s turn! (4) *Adult sits on floor with legs apart and straight.* Child jumps over one leg and then the other leg. Reverse roles. (5) *Adult*

## Planning Physical Activities

Provide structured daily physical activity

Include a variety of activities

Praise children for participating in an activity—building confidence is more important than skill (“I’m glad you enjoyed playing that game” *instead of* “You played that game really well”).

Keep children moving without it seeming like “exercise” or something they “have to do”.

Be a good role model by being active yourself!

*holds rod or rope* at a low height. Child jumps or hops over. Adult’s turn!

## Pathways

Needs lots of space (a spacious room, outdoor concrete area, or a grassy play surface would all work). Create pathways with obstacles such as cones and chairs that children can follow by running, walking, or steering a riding toy. Masking tape or rope pathways also provide challenges. Create a pathway in a straight, angular or curved pattern. Encourage children to move, steer a riding toy, or push an object along the pathway.

JAYDEN (SEABIRD ISLAND)



These activities can be adapted for use inside or outdoors and don’t require any fancy equipment. Reprinted from *Child & Family Canada* web site: [www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca)





## REGIONAL REPS



### **North West Region** **Nancy Anderson**

Head Start Coordinator  
Moberly Lake Sauleau First Nations  
Reserve.

I enjoy my job and the children very much. I have lived in this area all my life and have four of my own children that are in their teens now. I am also a new Grandmother and it is a whole different story having a grand child. God blesses us with all sorts of stuff. I am very thankful for his blessings.

Tel: (250) 788-9754  
Fax: (250) 788-9347

On Reserve Head Start sites across B.C. are very diverse, ranging from rural to more urban, some isolated, others less so, with many different territories and cultural groups.

The Head Start Regional Advisory Committee has representatives from the four B.C. regions to bring a grassroots perspective to discussions about needs, priorities and realities of Head Start communities.

Although it's not possible to have a voice from each community at the table, the regional reps are there to speak on behalf of all communities to Health Canada staff.

### **North East Region** **Lorraine Naziel**

Administrator  
Kyah Wiget Education Society (Moricietown Band)

My name is "Wilawhl" (Lorraine Naziel), I have four children and have been involved with education for 19 years. My interests lie in community development, health and wellness and in providing the best services to all families. I like to travel, hike, read and continuously educate myself. I raise my hands to all people involved with the hard work of providing early childhood services to your people.

Tel: (250) 847-3166 Fax: (250) 847-3813



## R E G I O N A L R E P S

## Vancouver Island Region Joan Gignac

Childcare Manager  
Chemainus First Nation Child Care Centre

Hi, I'm Joan Gignac. I am from the Sagamok Anishnabek Ojibway Nation in Ontario. I have been living and working in BC for 13 years. I am an Early Childhood Educator and have worked in a wide variety of child care settings and am very happy to be where I am today. I live and work on Vancouver Island and am very pleased to represent this region in the Regional Advisory Committee for Head Start.

Tel: (250) 245-0994 Fax: (250) 245-1379  
E-mail: [jgignac@cfnation.com](mailto:jgignac@cfnation.com)



If you have any concerns or suggestions that you would like to be brought forth more strongly in discussions about Head Start, feel welcome to contact the rep for your region, who can in turn pass along your ideas at Regional Advisory Committee discussions.



## Southern B.C. Region Candace Robotham

ECE Program Administrator  
Seabird Island Head Start

I am a single mother of an eight year old, who is my inspiration and my reason for getting involved in Head Start four years ago. She is also the driving force behind my desire, hopefully, to make a difference in the lives of children by ensuring that every child receives everything that he or she needs, to be a thriving child. I would really like to be a voice for the South Mainland Zone and look forward to ongoing communications with Head Start sites within my region.

Tel (604) 796-2177 Fax: (604) 796-3729  
E-mail: [candace\\_robatham@seabirdisland.ca](mailto:candace_robatham@seabirdisland.ca)





# Upcoming Events

September 25, 2004

**Growing Curriculum from the Lives of Children and Their Families (Kamloops).** Strategies for setting up environments, offering materials, observing, using documentation, and working with families to develop curriculum that is meaningful. Registration package available online at: [www.cariboo.bc.ca/education/ece/conference/index.html](http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/education/ece/conference/index.html)  
Info: Cindy Piwowar (250) 371-5666  
E-mail: [cpiwowar@cariboo.bc.ca](mailto:cpiwowar@cariboo.bc.ca)

September 25, 2004

**Northwest Regional Child Care Conference: "Together Again!" (Terrace).**  
Tel: (250) 638-1863  
Toll-free: 1-888-638-1863

October 2, 2004

**"Celebrating Together, Learning from Each Other" (Prince George, UNBC).** Annual Northern Child Care conference for child care providers, teachers, social workers, parents and anyone invested in the well-being of children. Cost: Early bird (before Sept 17) \$65; otherwise \$80  
Contact: Stacey Christie, Family YMCA of Prince George (250) 562-9341

October 4 - 5, 2004

**Doing What Works: Second Alberta Early Years Conference (Edmonton, Alberta).** Registration deadline: September 20. Explore ways of doing what works to support children and their families. This conference will examine best practice and research in early child development.  
Tel: Dean Heuman (780) 732-7213  
E-mail: [conference@albertaearyyears.ca](mailto:conference@albertaearyyears.ca)  
Web site: [www.albertaearyyears.ca](http://www.albertaearyyears.ca)

October 4 - 7, 2004

**Walk In Balance: Capacity Building for Front-Line Workers (Richmond).** Presented by the Community Health Associates of B.C.  
Toll-free: 1-800-379-3300  
Fax: (250) 503-1733

Oct 14 - 15, 2004

**Changing Fathers, Evolving Practices: Father Involvement Network - BC Training Session (Kelowna).** BC Council for Families has a new initiative—Father Involvement Network-BC. The vision is: "A province where fathering is respected & supported". Four workshops, manuals and lunches. Cost \$100.  
Tel: (604) 660-0675  
Toll-free: 1-800-663-5638  
E-mail: [bccf@bccf.bc.ca](mailto:bccf@bccf.bc.ca)

Oct 15 - 16, 2004

**"The Spirit Goes On" (Cranbrook).** Early Childhood Educators of BC East Kootenay Branch  
Contact Beth: (250) 426-4043  
E-mail: [eksc@shaw.ca](mailto:eksc@shaw.ca)

Oct 22 - 23, 2004

**Building Strength in Communities (100 Mile House).** Workshops with best-selling authors Barbara Coloroso and Gordon Neufeld, sex educator Meg Hickling, and First Nations child protection educator Shelly Cardinal. Limited number of scholarships available.  
Tel: (250) 395-5155  
E-mail: [crr@cariboofamily.org](mailto:crr@cariboofamily.org)  
Web site: <http://www.grt-net.com/BuildingStrength>

November 6 - 8, 2004

**FNESC/First Nations SchoolNet Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education (Vancouver).**  
Tel: (604) 925-6087  
Fax: (604) 925-6097

November 12 - 14, 2004

**BC Aboriginal Child Care Society 7th Annual Training Conference (Richmond).** Workshops on early intervention, infant development, child care practice and administration, family support, and integration, plus specialized two-day training on developmental assessments.  
Tel: (604) 990-9939  
Fax: (604) 990-9457  
E-mail: [lisa@acc-society.bc.ca](mailto:lisa@acc-society.bc.ca)

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**We would love to hear from you!**

Please send your photos, story ideas, draft articles, staff and site profiles, questions you would like answered, resource contacts, great curriculum ideas, and success stories you would like to share.

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