



## B.C. First Nations Head Start **Creating a Literacy-Rich Environment**

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AT QUATHIASKI COVE ON QUADRA ISLAND, THE CAPE MUDGE BAND HEAD START STAFF BELIEVE STRONGLY IN LITERACY and have collected many useful ideas for incorporating literacy activities into their program.

On the walls, children see both the Kwakala alphabet and the English alphabet. Children's name tags are posted with magnets or Velcro in all centres (for easy removal and replacement) for the children to use in printing and other activities. Note pads, paper, clip boards and pencils are presented in a variety of interesting ways in all the centres. Children enjoy using the card master with their First Nations language and love listening to taped books, stories and games, both in Kwakala and in English.

A dramatic play area changes to coincide with monthly themes. For the "Communities" theme, staff collected books about different communities, local tourist pamphlets, pencils, paper, envelopes and stamps. They made a large map of the community with the names of all the streets and the house addresses of the children, so the children could learn where everyone lives in the community, and could write and "mail" each other letters.

For the "Health" theme, children made gym membership cards, which they put in a recipe box to take out and hang up whenever they go into the dramatic area "gym."

Art and literacy projects have included bean names and cookie and dough letters.

The center even has an "office" area complete with typewriters, calculators, and printing materials—a favorite for the children!

Specific literacy activities throughout the day include children's morning sign-in (using a special sign-in sheet, with parent or teacher help), circle time with songs, stories and rhyming and letter games, a half-hour quiet time for individual reading, puzzles, printing and drawing and the Book Bag Club.