

I was amazed at the response that we had from the community; everyone kept asking where we were going next. Our greatest challenge was making sure there were enough rides and keeping to a schedule, because some destinations, like for picking huckleberries, were at least a 4-hour drive. This is a long time for little ones to sit in the heat of summer. We also had to share the band van with other departments, so trips had to be planned around availability. Through all the trials of getting the field trip organized, the rewards were awesome. Many of our families had never traveled to any of these places, or had never had the opportunity to take their children on outings like this. We learned a lot about our environment and our culture and we anticipate many more trips in the future.

Barb McLean
Coordinator, Soda Creek Head Start

The Kindness Chain

Our “Kindness Chain” has really increased some positive behaviours. The chain is made out of paper strips, each helpful or kind gesture is written on each strip, with the child’s name. The strips are connected to create a beautiful, colorful chain. Some examples would be: helping a friend with a zipper, pushing the tire swing, or helping someone finish an art project. Now the children are telling staff when their friends are “on the chain” for good deeds—not just the staff are noticing. The children are proud to be on the chain and enjoy watching it get longer.

Peavine AHS, High Prairie, Alberta
Reprinted from *Creation Stories: Personal Reflections About Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities*, 2002.

Born to Read Bags

“The more parents, relatives and caregivers read to babies and young children, the more likely the child will develop a life-long interest in reading,” says Audrey Waite, coordinator of the Comox Valley AHS. To reinforce this message, Comox Valley AHS and their partner, the local health unit, developed a Born to Read book bag for newborns. Audrey credits the local Early Literacy program with the book bag idea, which was funded through the CAPC mobilization fund.

The Born to Read bag is presented to First Nations mothers at the hospital or when the nurse makes her first home visit. It contains a tiny newborn t-shirt with the “Born to Read” logo and includes pamphlets on the importance of reading to babies, two videos (AHS *Celebrate the Dream* and *Precious Minds*—www.preciousminds.org—about nurturing literacy in the early years); and an aboriginal book.

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contest what are your favorite aboriginal children's books?

We want to know what Head Start children, staff, and families love to read! Tell us about your favorite aboriginal children’s books and why you love them, so we can share them with other sites through the newsletter.

All submissions will be entered into a draw and winners will receive new books for their collections!

E-mail or fax entries to:
Head Start Favorite Children’s Book Contest
Attn: Kelly Terbasket
Fax: (250) 499-8012
E-mail:
Kelly_terbasket@nethop.net

Entries must be received on or before Friday, April 7, 2006