



B.C. First Nations Head Start The Family Tree and the Preschool Family Train

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The Family Tree

THE GOAL OF THIS PROJECT WAS TO INVOLVE FAMILIES IN THE PROGRAM AS WELL AS FIND OUT HOW FAMILIES ARE CONNECTED IN THE PROGRAMS.

We gave out large leaf shapes to each family for gluing on pictures of all members of their families. We provided glue, glitter, decorations and a place for parents to work if they wanted. Some families spent a lot of time finding photos which included two or more generations. It was interesting for all of us to see which families were related and how many children in the center were related to one another. Families showed interest in what other families put together and talked about people in the pictures who they recognized. Some people were surprised that they were related to people in other families through grandparents or marriages etc.

The completed photo collage on the leaf was attached to branches of a tree cut out from paintings the children had created. It sort of had an Eric Carle [children's book author] effect.

To go along with the picture leaf collage we included a family tree diagram for each family to fill out names as far back as they could remember. We drew a stick figure for the child at the bottom and then circles, fanning out for mom and dad, their brothers and sisters, nephews, nieces, grandmas, grandpas, etc. It was titled "This is My Family." It is amazing how large some of the families are.

"The project has to be displayed at the eye level of the children so they can look at it whenever they want. It would also be a good display for a long hallway."

The Preschool Family Train

THIS WAS A FUN PROJECT WHICH STARTED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR WITH US TAKING PHOTOS OF THE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES ON THE FIRST DAY OF PRESCHOOL. We continued taking photos over the weeks and included aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, cousins, etc.

We ended up with a whole bunch of photos and we couldn't decide how to display them in a fun

way. We happened to be talking about transportation at the time and the children made a large train by cutting out rectangles and painting them. This was attached along the wall and looked quite empty.

So we decided to cut around the figures in the photos and put them into the train—it looked like the train was full of family members! When the children saw all of their photos with their parents, cousins, etc. on the wall they were quite excited. They asked for photos of themselves with other family members: “My Grandpa isn’t there.” So we made sure that the next time grandpa was visiting we took a photo of him with the child. We even had one family member remark that he wasn’t on the train yet, so we took a photo right away!

The Preschool Train fits in with our song when we line up for preschool every day.

“Oh the Preschool Train is leaving—all aboard! Toot, Toot
Oh the Preschool Train is leaving—all aboard! Toot, Toot
Oh the Preschool Train is leaving, Oh the Preschool Train is leaving
Oh the Preschool Train is leaving—all aboard! Toot, Toot”

The children often visit this area with their friends and find their own photos and photos of their families. Some arguments happen around whose uncle or aunt a person might be but that’s all part of learning about families and how they connect.

Marilyn Robbins
Nutsumaat Lelum Head Start (Chemainus)