



PROVIDER

Winter 2011 Newsletter

Holiday Message

Dear PacificCARE Family;

Here we are once again at the holiday season when people the world over give thanks, and reach out in generosity to give to others.

The celebration of Christmas begins in the mists of a long distant history and extends along the future of the human family. For most of us our vision of Christmas is linked to our childhood and the holiday traditions we grew up with.

In Canada, Christmas is celebrated in many different ways; we are a variety of ethnic groups, most of which celebrate with their own traditions. Vancouver is illuminated in lights; in Montreal masses are celebrated in beautiful cathedrals and in Nova Scotia carols are sung at home, in church and on the streets. In Newfoundland, the inhabitants fishing skills are put to work. During Christmas week, the daily catch is given to the church to provide extra funds to help those in need.

Those not celebrating Christmas, may be celebrating Hanukkah or Kwanza or observing the Winter Solstice. In each celebration there is a focus on family, love and gratitude. At this time of year, our heightened awareness of those less fortunate may coax us to make an extra effort... to visit someone lonely, to offer food, drink or money to a family in need. Many hundreds of years ago, a wise man named St. Francis of Assisi reminded us to be Instruments of Peace. If we can be more aware all year round of how we can achieve this, the world will benefit from such positive energy.



Dianne and her family



I am most grateful for the terrific team I work with at PacificCARE and for our wonderful care providers who enrich the lives of children and families every day. I thank our Board of Directors, Stakeholders, Co-locators, and The Ministry of Children and Families for their contributions to success in the communities we serve.

My family and I wish you all blessings of abundance, good health and peace in the coming year.

Dianne Magor, Executive Director

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How to Grow a Child's Brain

**Sandra Allen, Child Care Consultant
CCRR Courtenay**

A child's brain is a dynamic, growing organ influenced directly by the nurturing, stimulation, and opportunities experienced in the first few years of life. A newborn's brain is like a forest of tree trunks without branches. These trunks are called neurons and there are millions upon millions in the infant's brain. These neurons must grow "branches" or synapses that connect them together forming an interwoven web of pathways. The number and quality of these pathways will determine a child's future ability to learn, think, feel, make appropriate decisions and act in accordance with those decisions.

The environment a child grows up in plays a huge role in his/her intelligence and academic success in life. Environments rich in mental stimulation, proper nutrition, physical activity, security, love and acceptance contribute to the actual physical development of the brain. On the other hand, stressful environments, lack of nutrition or lack of stimulation limit a brain's development and a child's future success.

Current brain research has identified ways to grow a child's brain providing him/her opportunities to excel from birth to the classroom and beyond. For optimal brain development to occur, a child's environment must contain the following ten components.

1. **A nurturing environment is essential for a child to develop to his/her full potential.** The ways in which infants and young children are nurtured will influence who they are as adults. They require empathy, compassion, caring and love to ensure their brains are hardwired to be empathetic and caring to

(Continued on page 3)



PacificCARE
Promoting Quality Child Care

**Office hours for
Nanaimo and Courtenay**
8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Monday to Friday

Nanaimo Office open until 6 pm on Thursdays
Closed all Statutory Holidays


Head Office:
3156 Barons Road, Nanaimo, BC V9T 4B5

Courtenay Satellite Office:
237-3rd Street, Courtenay, BC V9N 1E1

Phone: (250)756-2022 or 1-888-480-CARE (2273)
Fax: (250)756-2021

Website: www.pacific-care.bc.ca
Email: mailbox@pacific-care.bc.ca

Please note: if you are unable to reach your area consultant and must talk to someone you can call the Nanaimo office and speak with a consultant or the Coordinator of Programs and Services.



*Holiday
Office Hours*

*The Nanaimo and
Courtenay offices will
be closed on
December 26, 27
and January 2.*

** The opinions expressed in the Provider do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of PacificCARE. * This newsletter may contain links to websites that are created and maintained by other organizations. PacificCARE does not necessarily endorse all the views expressed on these websites; nor does it guarantee the accuracy or suitability of any information presented.*

A Child's Brain: The Research

(Continued from page 2)

themselves and others. Children require the physical and emotional closeness that comes with breast feeding, cuddling, and physical contact.

2. **Children need to be raised in a safe, stress free environment.** When the brain is occupied with survival or in fight/flight mode, learning and brain development is limited. There is no place for sarcasm, bullying, threats, put-downs or fear in a child's environment.
3. **Children must feel a connection to the natural world.** This connection is vital for emotional and social development. Physical activity, which is vital for brain development, increases when time is spent outdoors. Experiencing nature first hand helps children make sense of their world and feel connected to local and global communities. There is growing concern among early childhood educators and researchers about the lack of connection many children have with the natural environment. This disconnection is referred to as "nature deficit disorder." How can children become the future stewards of our planet if they feel no connection to it or to the creatures that call it home?
4. **Ask your child questions and encourage him/her to do the same.** Asking questions and problem solving is linked to increased brain activity and development. Instead of directly answering a child's question, ask instead what he/she thinks the answer may be. Ask "what if" questions: what if the sun was cold; what if plants weren't watered; what if giraffes necks were short? Find opportunities to stimulate a child's problem solving abilities through questioning. Accept solutions that may be different than your own, as long as nobody's safety is at risk.
5. **Oral storytelling is vital to children's development.** Children love to listen to stories full of imagery and expressive language. Stories stimulate the imagination and increase vocabulary and language abilities. Research has shown that a child's brain literally "lights up" with activity when listening to a story. Stories provide opportunity to process new ideas and consider alternate possibilities. Encourage children to tell stories as well as listen to them. This provides opportunity to practice language skills while verbalizing new concepts or ideas.
6. **Read to your child every day beginning at birth.** Help your children learn to hold a book properly and turn the pages. Be patient when a toddler turns a page before you have finished reading it. Read favorite stories over and over understanding that this repetition is vital for language development and brain growth. Talk about the pictures. Ask questions about the story. Find opportunities to talk about ethical dilemmas presented in books to encourage development of empathy and compassion.
7. **Encourage a child's imagination.** When he/she becomes involved in imaginative play, help prolong and expand the play through joining in or providing new props or ideas. Children learn through imaginative play, which paves the way for abstract thinking, intelligent thought and academic success. Limit the hours spent in front of television or computers; instead, involve children in hands on activities to enhance brain development.
8. **Allow creativity in thought, action, and creation.** Encourage exploration into the "unconventional," which helps children to think outside the box. Provide opportunity for individual and group exploration. Welcome independent thought. Explore the similarities and differences in local and global environments. Embrace the energetic, questioning, and chattering preschooler knowing that his/her brain is supercharged and full of creative potential.
9. **To learn, children must play.** It is through play that children's neuron pathways develop and grow. In fact, children are hardwired to play. Play provides opportunity for children to learn lifelong skills that transfer into adult life. When in the magical state of play, children are: present in the moment, paying attention, enjoying life, unaware of time, open to creativity and imagination, and able to explore the unknown safely. Allow children's imagination to soar during play, as it doesn't matter if the pirate escapes his ship in a parachute or a bird has four wings. Refrain from correcting children's play with reality checks.
10. **Provide rich experiences through an environment filled with opportunities for learning, language, stories, and play.** Remember that the more a brain does, the more it is capable of doing. Ensure the environment is safe, accepting, loving, and nurturing. Provide new and novel experiences that stimulate curiosity and imagination. Take responsibility for being the architects of children's brains when they are in your care.

Article Adapted from: Anaka, G. (2005) *Your Magical Brain: How it Learns Best*. Portal Press: Vancouver BC



What's Cooking?

It's that time of year when a bowl of soup or chili sounds like just the right thing to fill us up and warm us up. What better to go with it than some corn cakes... and a good story!

Annie and the Wild Animals is filled with wonderful illustrations of animals and the forest in winter. What does Annie use the corn cakes for? Read the story and find out.

Literacy Links:

- **Annie and the Wild Animals** by Jan Brett

Topics for Discussion:

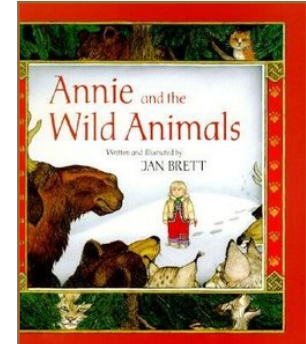
Search the borders of the book for wild animals.

- What kinds of animals did you find?
- How many?
- What can you tell me about them?
- Do they live in our forests?

Annie's Corn Cakes

What you need:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| • 1 1/4 cups | Flour |
| • 3/4 cup | Corn meal |
| • 1/4 cup | Sugar |
| • 2 tsp. | Baking Powder |
| • 1/4 tsp. | Salt |
| • 1 cup | Milk |
| • 1/4 cup | Olive oil |
| • 1 | Egg, beaten |



How to:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. In a large bowl mix together flour, corn meal, sugar, baking powder and salt.
3. Stir in milk, olive oil and egg.
4. Pour batter into a greased 8 or 9 inch pan. Bake for 25 minutes.

Reference:

Brett, J. (n.d.). *Annie and the wild animals web project*. Retrieved from <http://www.janbrett.com/piggybacks/annie.htm>



*Join us for
fun and
learning!*

Winter Fun



Five Little Snowmen

Five little snowmen round and fat. (*hold up 5 fingers*)
 Each one wearing a funny hat. (*pretend to touch a hat on your head*)
 In the morning, out came the sun. (*arms up into a circle over your head*)
 It looked down and melted one. (*move your hands down in front of you to the ground*)

Repeat with 4,3,2,1 snowmen.

Pipe Cleaner Bird Feeder

Here is an easy bird feeder craft—no mess and good practice for fine motor skills. All you need is pipe cleaners and a box of Cheerios. Loop one end of the pipe cleaners and let children put the cheerios on—then loop the other end. That's it! Now they are ready to go outside on a tree or bush. The children will enjoy checking daily to see if the birds have found their treats.

<http://www.preschoolplaybook.com/2009/01/pipecleaner-bird-feeder.html>



Pine Cone Tree

Take a pine cone and put it in some water, roll it in potting soil and then sprinkle it with grass seed. Place in a sunny window and water regularly, and watch your pine cone turn into a mini Christmas tree!

Love Is A Circle

Love is a circle,
 Round and round (make a circling motion with arm)
 Love goes up, (raise arms up)
 And Love comes down, (lower arms)
 Love is on the inside, (pull hands inward towards chest)
 Trying to get out, (pull hands away from chest)
 Love is whirling and twirling about! (move hands in a spinning motion)



Temper Tantrums: Calming the Storm

Susan Oliver, Child Care Consultant
CCRR Oceanside

We have all witnessed them, the meltdowns that seem worthy of an Oscar nomination - out of control crying, screaming and flailing when a child doesn't get their way. Temper tantrums top the list for behaviours parents and caregivers want to see disappear – especially when they happen in public. Most “experts” agree that the best way to stop tantrums is to never give in to the outburst. Giving into a tantrum by giving the child what they want reinforces the behaviour. So what do you do? Stay cool, stay calm, ignore the stares of other parents and if you can, ignore the behaviour (not the child). The more attention a tantrum gets the longer it will probably last.

Temper tantrums are most common among toddlers and seem to diminish as children's communication skills grow and they are better able to express their feelings and frustrations. Some common reasons for tantrums are:

- Exhaustion, hunger, overstimulation
- Stress, change in routine
- Too many or too few choices
- Illness
- Strong will
- Immature temperament
- Expectations that are not in line with a child's capabilities
- Fear

What can you do to head off a tantrum before it starts?

- Recognize the child's natural temperament and act accordingly. Just like adults, some kids are more intense than others; they may need more time to transition between activities or to calm down. They may not handle a skipped nap or sudden change in routine without consequences.



- Be aware of your own behaviour when it comes to handling frustrations; model staying calm and expressing your feelings with a cool head.
- Recognize signs that a tantrum is on the way. Distract the child, change activities or take a break.
- Respect eating and sleeping routines and try not to do too much in a day.
- Give attention to positive behaviors.
- Help a child to learn how to name his or her feelings.

Once a tantrum has started, stay calm. Give the child some space and make sure they are safe. If you are in public take the child to a quiet place. If the child is a young toddler – stay with them until they calm down. If it's an older child stay close but busy yourself with something else and pay attention when the

tantrum winds down. When it's over, help them to describe their feelings. Use the tantrum as an opportunity to teach coping skills and help the child deal with their feelings in healthy, positive ways.

References:

Borba, Michelle. *The Big Book of Parenting Solutions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.

"Growing Miracles: Temper Tantrums." *Alberta Health Services*. N.p., 2011. Web. 17 Nov 2011.

www.albertahealthservices.ca/1942.asp

Young Writers' Corner

Big Money

by Will Canthal

Woo! Its my birthday and I'm excited. Oh I almost forgot, my name is Will. Anyways it's going to be a awesome day! Later my friends started coming over and I only invited five friends because I don't like to many. Their names are Tom, Max, Ethan, Mike and Chris. By the time everyone was here the pizza came we were starting to get a little hungry so lucky it was fast.

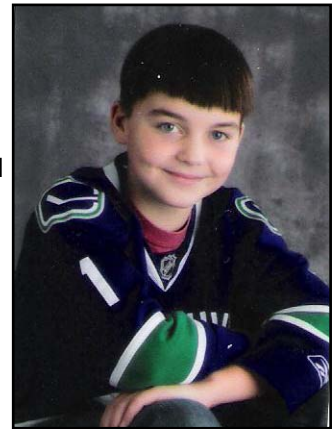
So after eating pizza and having something to drink. We were almost full (because there was still cake and presants) and that's always exciting. So we ate lots of cake and were ready for preasants. Tom and Max (because their twins) gave me a video game. Mike gave a remote control hand and a 4 foot long fork. Chris gave me \$20 and Ethan gave me \$100 because hes rich. I knew what to do with it. So after my birthday on the next day I biked down to the hospital where my grandma went when she had nemonia. When I got there I gave them the money they said "What for?" I said "because you helped my grandmother" well they said thank you and I felt better after that. ~ The End ~

ps. This was based on real life.

Will Canthal

Age: 11

Parksville



Shasta

by Brittany Farrington

One day there was a beautiful appaloosa horse, her name was Shasta. She loves to jump! She is a wild horse, I go in the woods and shout Shasta and she comes. I ride her every day and jump a lot! She is 17 hands and she is 8 years old, we jump 4 feet! She is my Best friend. Now one day me and Shasta went for a ride down to the river and we jumped a BIG log! I found a HUGE horse shoe! I brought it home with me and showed my Mom, She thought it was soo cool!

Anyways we always have so much fun together! We jump, we pole bend, we berral race, I don't have a saddle so I ride her bear back. But we do English and western activaties! I saved up my allowance and bought a bridle. I made her halter of rope. And some times I get her treats. But right now I'm saving for a saddle! We go on amazing adventures, and I really want to be in a show, the only problem is I don't have a traler or a saddle! So right now we just ride...well everywhere! Some times I pretend I am a cowboy and I make a lasoo with a rope and I have a toy gun (it doesn't shoot) and I hold it in my right hand. Other times I pretend I'm in a show and say walk, trot, canter, gallop it's so much fun! I play lot's of games with Shasta, like some times we go in the secret medow and play with my mom's exercise ball. Other times we play hide and go seek in the forest. Shasta is very smart and I want her to live forever! ~ The End ~



Brittany Farrington

Age: 10

Nanoose Bay

Island Child Care Connections

In late September, PacificCARE hosted an Island Child Care Connections (I.C.C.) meeting at the Nanaimo head office. 10 Care Providers attended, PacificCARE consultants Laurie Sturgeon and Kirsten Barlow demonstrated how to use the Die Cutter machine and everyone enjoyed a night of networking and support.

I.C.C. meets the fourth Thursday of each month at rotating locations. I.C.C. is a group of childcare providers helping other childcare providers and parents through sharing resources, opportunities for professional development, support and friendship. The focus of this group is to provide opportunities for connecting with other Licensed or Licensed Not Required child care providers in the Nanaimo area, as well as potentially mentoring start-up networking groups in other areas. For more information or to join the group, please visit their website at <http://www.childcare-connections.webs.com/>



left to right: Tiffany, Fran Stoddart, Chelsey Davis, Anja Wittwer.

Congratulations to Christine Balatti, Sandra Blokker, Anne Charlton, Haley Creswell, Valerie Longland, Vanessa Pearson and Michelle Priemus on completing Good Beginnings training.
Special thanks to Amber McLeod of Nanaimo Integrated Child Care (NICC) who donated one of her beautiful felt stories as a door prize for our Good Beginnings Course. Thank you to Amber for her generosity; what a great resource for a care provider who is just starting out.



left to right (Madden, Hazel, Teagan, Mya and Levi)

In the Spotlight

Willow Tree Childcare

Willow Tree Childcare is a Licensed Family Daycare located in the Cinnabar Valley operated by Vanessa Pearson. Vanessa started with PacificCARE as a registered LNR. She submitted this article.

As a Kindergarten teacher I wanted to spend more time with my four year old daughter, Mya, while still working in education and childcare. The Family Childcare setting was the perfect opportunity for me to meet the needs of my family while still following my passion for working with children and teaching.

Regular walks, lots of outdoor exploring and healthy home-made meals are an important part of my program, as well as creative play, learning activities, art, singing, dancing and lots and lots of stories. For children everything is a learning experience and I love that I am able to provide a safe, enriching environment to inspire that natural curiosity and love of learning.

Greetings from New Consultants

Nanaimo/Ladysmith

Hello Everyone,

My name is Laurie Sturgeon and I am PacificCARE's new Child Care Consultant for Nanaimo/Ladysmith.

Before joining the PacificCARE team I worked for the Boys and Girls Club as a Leader at the Chemainus and Ladysmith Clubs and as a Supervisor at the Maple Bay Boys and Girls Club. My previous experience was working as a Guardianship Social Worker, a Child and Family Counselor and as a Family Support Worker.

I look forward to meeting you.

Laurie Sturgeon
Child Care Consultant, CCRR Nanaimo

Campbell River/North Island

Hello Parents and Care Providers,

My name is Eleanor Gee and, as the new Child Care Consultant in Campbell River and North Island, I am excited to return to PacificCARE. I was previously a part time consultant on the West Coast from June 2001 to October 2003.

There have been some exciting changes that have taken place during my eight year absence, and I am looking forward to meeting and serving the care providers and parents of my new community. I bring experience as a school trustee, former pregnancy outreach worker, special education and supported child care worker as well as a facilitator to the child and youth advisory from the West Coast.

My office is set up in Room A127 at the Robron Centre in Campbell River and I look forward to meeting you. I am available Monday -Friday, 8:30-4:30 in person or by phone at 250-203-6022 . I am here to assist you!

Eleanor Gee
Child Care Consultant, CCRR Campbell River

Canada Celebrates Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day is a national awareness initiative created by ABC Life Literacy Canada in 1999 and held annually on January 27 to raise awareness of the importance of reading and engaging in literacy-related activities as a family. More than 1.5 million Canadians have participated in the initiative since its debut. Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development. Even just 15 minutes a day can improve a child's literacy skills dramatically, and can help a parent improve their skills as well.

<http://abclifeliteracy.ca/family-literacy-day>

The My Story Your Story Literacy events happens at various locations: Free Children's performers, crafts, Parent/Child Mother Goose, puppet show, adult story telling and more.

Saturday, January 28 - 1 to 3:30 p.m.

- Gabriola Library: 5 - 575 North Road, Gabriola Island 250-247-7878
- Ladysmith Library: 1st Avenue, Ladysmith 250-245-3322
- Wellington Branch Library: 3032 Barons Road, Nanaimo 250-758-5544

Sunday, January 29 - 1 to 3:30 p.m.

- Nanaimo Harbourfront Library, 90 Commercial Street, Nanaimo 250-753-1154
- Serious Coffee, Commercial Street, Nanaimo 250-591-1065

Check out Island Family Info at www.islandfamilyinfo.ca for Literacy events in your area.



Quality Improvement Update

PacificCARE's **Annual General Meeting** was held on Oct. 24. A report can be found on the PacificCARE website, www.pacific-care.bc.ca or you can request a copy from the Nanaimo Head office. The Board of Directors is looking for more volunteers, so if you are interested in joining, please feel welcome to contact the Executive Director, Dianne Magor.

PacificCARE staff participated in "**The Great British Columbia ShakeOut**" **Earthquake drill** on Oct. 20. If you are interested in "ShakeOut Resources" you can visit www.shakeoutbc.ca.

The staff throughout PacificCARE's regions and our co-locators at the Nanaimo office took training for providing a respectful and safe environment. We are now designated as a "**Safe Harbour**" which means we are an organization that serves and celebrates diversity. If interested, find out more at www.safeharbour.ca.

In Port Alberni, a new Drop-In playgroup has started at the Hilton Centre on Monday mornings (excluding holidays) from 10—11 am. Contact local consultant, Scott Beam for more information. If you haven't already visited, check out the new PacificCARE office when stopping in at Hilton Centre.

Advisory group sessions are being planned for the New Year, so watch for more information on how you can contribute your feedback. Feel free to contact us anytime to let us know how we are doing and how we can serve you best. Phone 250-756-2022 or 1-888-480-2273 or email us at mailbox@pacific-care.bc.ca.



Child Care News and Links



100 Picture Books to Read Before Kindergarten

The Greater Victoria Public Library's Children and Family Literacy Librarians have selected 100 exceptional picture books to share with the children in your life before kindergarten. Ranging from classics like *Goodnight Moon* and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* to newer entries like *Actual Size* and "*I'm not cute!*" The books on this list will entertain and inspire. So snuggle up and get reading! <http://gvpl.ca/interests/parents-educators/gvpl-s-100-picture-books>

Improving Autism Worker Training in Rural and Remote B.C

Behaviour interventionists working with children with autism in rural and remote areas in B.C. have a new opportunity to increase their skills through online training offered by Douglas College in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). <http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/improving-autism-worker-training-in-rural-and-remote-bc.html>

B.C. Expands Immunizations for Children

Immunization is one of the most effective ways to prevent serious disease. Starting Jan. 1, 2012, three new vaccines will be added to the British Columbia childhood immunization schedule, to ensure that children in B.C. get the most effective protection possible from preventable diseases.

<http://www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2011/11/bc-expands-immunizations-for-children.html>

Meet PacificCARE's Newest Care Providers

Nanaimo/Ladysmith

LNR	Aurora Capras
LNR	Sarah Taylor
Colleen's Place FCC	Colleen Gerbrandt
LNR	Sarah Segal
LNR	Camille Paradis
LNR	Heather Krystik-Growcott
Inquiring Little Minds	Alisha Neumann
LNR	Sandra Scott
Timber Tots Child Care	Erin Dahle

Oceanside

LNR	Michelle Priemus
Creative Gigglers FCC	Christina Zanchetta

West Coast

Stepping Stones Childcare	Ashley Salmon
Community Children's Centre	Fiona McCallum
	Amy Smith
	Laura MacPherson
Baby Steps (AVCS)	Sheila Prpich
Stepping Stones Daycare/ Preschool (AVCS)	Julie Spencer
Stepping Stones Too	Kelly Simister

Courtenay

Kate's on 5th	Katie Wyker
Little R's Preschool (4R's Education Centre)	Trenna McCaffrey
Wee Care @ Ecole Puntledge Park	Carla Carriere
Judy's Little Gems	Judy Weed
Room to Grow	Alix Wilson
LNR	Caroline Dube
LNR	Marlene Felsing

Campbell River/North Island

Little Stars Child Care	Leighann Ruel
	Sheila MacEachern
Sointula Children's Learning Centre	Jodie Lukow
Bright Beginnings Child Care	Lora Kennedy
Michelle's Little Munchkins Daycare	Michelle Cork
LNR	Fiona Pentland
LNR	Janine Martin
Kidscove Child Care	Hayley Millette



Statistics for July to September 30, 2011

241	Parents received referrals to child care services
2	Workshops and courses provided
90	Providers and parents were provided resources
19	Providers and parents borrowed from the toy and equipment library
3359	Individuals receiving consultations
36	Support visits
408	Parents assisted with subsidy forms