



NONA Child Development Centre

Accessibility Plan

2008-2010



Moving into our new building has certainly helped to address many of the accessibility issues faced by families and staff at the Centre. However there is always room for improvement and we would like to continue the work in making our services as accessible as possible to the children and families we serve as well as to the community in general.

As we have improved our building accessibility, we now need to shift our focus to community accessibility issues for the families we serve. There is the Measuring-Up Initiative, a 2010 Legacy Now project, designed to encourage communities such as Greater Vernon to look at ways to improve accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities. Participation within various community committees is more important than ever to ensure that accessibility issues for the families we served are raised and addressed. Finally, we need to continue to network and collaborate with other agencies that work with children and families to make sure that we are working together to address gaps in services. The following pages outline how we presently address potential barriers to our services, as well as a corrective action plan for removing barriers that we have identified.

ARCHITECTURAL/ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS

We already address **ARCHITECTURAL/ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS** faced by families through:

- Our automated front entrance door handle and level entry.
- Our elevator
- Our doorways and hallways are 36” wide.
- Handicapped parking spaces reserved for families that require wheelchair accessibility.
- The handicapped parking is close to the front entrance.
- Playground is complete and available for children who visit the Centre.
- Child-sized furniture in the Centre.
- An accessible washroom on every floor.
- Providing safety equipment such as stair gates, harnesses, helmets, and plug-in covers to families and caregivers.
- Monthly walkabouts by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
- Blinds on the windows for privacy and temperature control.

We already address **ARCHITECTURAL/ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS** faced by staff through:

- A brand new building-more light/windows, better temperature control.
- A staff room with running water and a dishwasher.
- An elevator.
- 2 washrooms per floor.
- Yearly inspections with the Fire Department and Fire Protection company.
- Monthly Health & Safety walkabouts to make address staff health and safety within the building.
- Being a cucumber/peanut-free zone (life threatening allergies)
- Being a smoke-free and scent-free building.

Architectural/Environmental Barrier Removal Plan:

BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
F A M I L I E S							
Poor access to building for evening events	Buy mobile doorbell.	High	\$75	Operations	December 2008	Admin	
Poor acoustics in the gym-some children cannot tolerate the sound.	Hang banners, carpet part of the walls, etc.	High	to investigate	RMCC?	September 2009	Heather	
Building hard to identify-no address seen from street.	Install signage on the building	High	?	Operations	September 2008	Admin	
Handicapped bathrooms-how to change older children?	Look into putting mats in bathrooms	Low	None	N/A	December 2008	OHS	
Lack of furniture in the family room	Secure donation for furniture	High	\$2000	Donation	September 2009	Board	
Lack of space for students, new staff	Book third floor rooms, continue to use booking system	Moderate	None	N/A	N/A	Admin	
S T A F F							
BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
Patio not wheelchair accessible	Build small ramp	Low	N/A	Donation	January 2010	Admin	

FINANCIAL BARRIERS

We already address **FINANCIAL BARRIERS** faced by families through:

- Our services are free of charge.
- Our Family Fund (funds collected from staff members to go toward the needs of the families we serve.)
- Applying for funding to the Variety Club and other service clubs on behalf of families to cover the costs of travel, equipment.
- Referring families in financial need to other resources in the community.
- Waiving fees for groups such as “Let’s Play” if cost is prohibitive.
- Resources such as toys, books, videos and equipment for families and caregivers to borrow.
- Informing families about financial benefits such as the Disability Tax Credit (Family Support Program), Child Care Subsidy, etc.
- A clothing exchange (IDP).
- Staff contributions for Christmas hampers every year for families who are experiencing financial difficulties.
- Assisting families with application forms and applying for funding.
- Providing discretionary fund for incidental expenses to Respite Caregivers so that children can access community events where there is a charge (i.e., entrance fees).
- Sessional time with the paediatricians.
- Membership with the BC Association for Child Development and Intervention. This group lobbies on behalf of CDCs on a provincial level.
- Membership with the Early Childhood Development Coalition, a planning committee for young children in our community.
- Membership with the North Okanagan Children Youth Family Committee.
- Membership with the Vernon Administrator’s Network.

Financial Barrier Removal Plan:

BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	\$\$	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
F A M I L I E S / S T A F F							
Poverty	Building partnerships within the community, advocacy	High	N/A	N/A	Ongoing	Everyone	
Lack of quality child care spaces	Building partnerships within the community, advocacy	High	N/A	N/A	Ongoing	Everyone	
Waitlists for some programs	Advocacy, quality improvement, partnerships	High	N/A	N/A	Ongoing	Helen/PAC	
Large caseloads prevents staff from visiting families very often	Advocacy, quality improvement, partnerships, workload management, streamlining tasks	High	N/A	N/A	Ongoing	Helen/PAC	
Individualized funding- some programs have limited resources	Alternative modes of communication, cover some staff costs, review priorities of program	Moderate	N/A	Operations	March 31, 2008	Helen/AS Program	
More families moving into the area is stretching resources	See above		N/A	N/A	Ongoing	Everyone	

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

We already address **ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS** faced by families through:

- Articles in the newspaper about the services that we provide, and some of the families that we serve.
- Our Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapists teaches student instructors with the Parks and Recreation Aquapercept/Aquadapt programs.
- Supported Child Development program supports children to be included in their neighbourhood child care settings.
- Supported Child Development and other staff have been involved with the Partnership programs which teach caregivers about how to include children with extra support needs in their child care centres.
- Providing services in community settings and modeling positive and inclusive practices.
- Providing opportunities for volunteers and students to visit NONA Child Development Centre.
- Education to community partners regarding various aspects of typical/atypical development.
- Advocacy to families who request support for meetings, transitions, etc.
- Family Care Plans that honour individual family cultural/spiritual values.
- Support groups.
- Sibshops.
- Ethics Committee.
- Community Committees such as FASD committee, ECD Coalition, etc.

We already address **ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS** faced by staff through:

- Reviewing and using our Code of Ethics.
- Inservices at staff meetings.
- Employment equity policy.
- Our collective agreements.
- Educating each other and promoting a team approach.

Attitudinal Barrier Removal Plan

BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
F A M I L I E S							
Families impacted by lack of understanding re: disability when going out in the community.	Do some community education/training, partnerships	High	N/A	N/A	June 2009	PAC	
Families feeling overwhelmed, etc.	Ongoing family centered care refreshers- Partnerships?	High	?	Staff Training Budget	June 2009	PAC	
Staff level of understanding how culture impacts the families they serve.	Ongoing cultural sensitivity training/education Staff aware of community resources	Moderate	N/A	Staff Training Budget	January 2010	PAC	
Staff level of understanding how mental health issues of family members impact the families they serve.	Ongoing training/education of staff Staff aware of community resources	Moderate	N/A	Staff Training Budget	January 2010	PAC	
Staff level of understanding how socio-economic issues impact the families they serve.	Ongoing training/education of staff Staff aware of community resources	Moderate	N/A	Staff Training Budget	January 2010	PAC	

COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

We already address **COMMUNICATION BARRIERS** faced by families through:

- Sending a simple Family Handbook to families once we receive a referral.
- Publishing a newsletter that is available to families and community members and is also available on our web site.
- Brochures that are clear and simple to read.
- A phone system with voice-mail capabilities.
- A website that lists our hours of operation, our contact information, as well as the programs that we offer.
- Participation in community events at which families can inquire about our services.
- Explaining processes to and helping families through various systems to meet their child's needs.
- Using family-friendly language in home visit records and videotaping home visits when requested.
- Reviewing, sharing and modifying reports about children so that parents can best understand them.
- Sharing and interpreting information with families from specialists.
- Scheduling meeting times that are best for families.
- Arranging for interpreters when needed.
- Referrals to Sunny Hill Health Centre's outreach teams.
- Providing pictorial aids for children with communication difficulties.
- Listing our contact numbers under different headings in various phone books.
- Listing our services in the "Can We Help You" directory.
- Various handbooks written for parents.
- Satisfaction surveys.
- Strong partnerships with our community partners such as public health, pediatricians, IHCAN, child care providers, school district personnel, other service agencies.

We already address **COMMUNICATION BARRIERS** faced by staff through:

- Informal networking opportunities at coffee and during breaks.
- Weekly intake meetings.
- Department staff meetings.
- Minutes of committee work at NONA on the public share.
- Mail slots.
- Regular staff meetings.
- Bulletin boards.
- Regular use of email between staff.
- A staff website.
- Staff individual email.
- Social events such as potlucks.
- Planning days/retreats.

Communication Barrier Removal Plan

BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
F A M I L I E S							
Staying connected with the other agencies serving the population we work with.	Increase partnerships with other agencies through 2 series of Lunch & Learns and invite other agencies Joining committees, subcommittees (ECD Coalition, Family Services, Share ED,	High	N/A	N/A	June 2009	Everyone	
S T A F F							
Lack of clarity regarding Service Coordinator role	PAC	High	N/A	Staff Training Budget	March 31, 2008	PAC	

TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS

We already address **TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS** faced by families through:

- Staff meet in the home with families who lack transportation.
- Staff visit children in child care settings.
- Joint home visits to families in outlying areas.
- Centre being on a direct bus route.
- Being centrally located.
- Providing transportation (Respite Care staff).
- Providing information and helping families to access transportation through Shriner’s Bus.
- Staff assists families in accessing funding for travel costs for medical appointments in Vancouver.
- Autism Services Program using the Handidart with some children,

We already address **TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS** faced by staff through:

- Reimbursement for cost of extra insurance costs.
- Reimbursement of travel costs on a per km basis.

Transportation Barrier Removal Plan

BARRIER	SOLUTION	PRIORITY	COST	FUNDING SOURCE	DUE DATE	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	✓
F A M I L I E S							
Families lack transportation to come to appointments at NONA	Advocate through the ECD Coalition for transportation support for families	Low	?	?	Ongoing	Heather	