



Over the Rainbow

June 2004

Newsletter of the NONA Child Development Centre

Summer Fun for Families



We are continuing our **Thursday drop-in group, Connections** over the summer at a variety of fun spots throughout the North Okanagan.

Unless otherwise posted, we meet from 10:30 to noon, but you are welcome to bring a lunch and stay longer...

Our AGM this year is on
September 13, 2004
at 7pm
In the NONA gym

Come out and
hear what is happening!

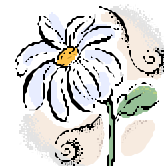
THURSDAYS IN THE SUN

- July 8** **Kin Beach**
- July 15** **Paddlewheel Park**
*Opportunity for all parents to try out **Outrigger canoeing**. We are looking to fill one boat of Dads between noon and 1pm. So come out all you Dads and try it out!*
- July 22** **Kirkland Beach**
- July 29** **Kin Beach BBQ from 4 to 7pm**
Bring salads or sweets and we will provide hotdogs and hamburgers. There will be musical instruments for everyone to play!
- August 5** **Lakeview Park**
- August 12** **Kirkland Beach**
- August 19** **Chickadee Ridge Ranch in Armstrong**
Bring lunch. Cost is \$4 per person. Kids under 3 are free. We will cover the cost if you cannot.. Please call Denise at 549-1281 for more information.
- August 26** **Kin Beach**

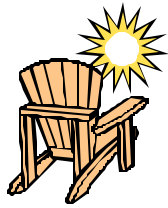
Our **CARF Accreditation Survey** is over! Although we don't know the results yet, the surveyors had some very positive things to say about NONA when they visited May 20/21, 2004. A big thank you goes to all the families who took time to answer questions by the surveyors.

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From the desk of Cherie Annand



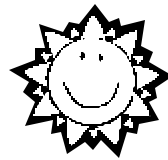
With summer coming, I thought we should remind you that our Centre is open during July and August. Staff will be taking holidays over the summer so some of our programs may not be operating for short periods if there are not enough staff to cover. We do try and take our vacation time around the same time as you do, so not to disrupt services too much.

Thank you to all of the families and children who participated

in our accreditation survey. After working on this process for 18 months or so, I can hardly believe we made it. The exit interview with the survey team was very positive and we look forward to receiving the final report in the summer.

Hope you have a sun filled summer.

Cherie Annand
Executive Director



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Mark it on your calendar!

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is on



September 13, 2004

at 7pm
in the NONA gym.

Please come and hear what we have done, and what we are planning for the upcoming year.

If you have any comments, contributions (stories, jokes, etc.) to this newsletter, please contact Heather Todd at 549-1281, or email accreditation@nona-cdc.com.

We welcome your feedback!

Visit our website at

www.nona-cdc.com

Dads Make a Difference!

(from *Father Involvement Initiative Ontario Network*: [www.http://www.cfii.ca/fion/home.php](http://www.cfii.ca/fion/home.php) and *Minnesota Fathers & Families Network*, May 2004: www.mnfathers.org).

Research shows that father involvement has enormous implications for their children in terms of social, emotional and cognitive development.

Young children with involved fathers or father figures have:

- Greater empathy;
- Less gender role stereotyping;
- More awareness of needs and rights of others;
- Greater generosity;
- Higher self-esteem;
- More self-control and less impulsive.



Patrick and his brother, Jamie and Dad, Don.

Children who grow up with involved fathers demonstrate important problem solving abilities:

- Increased curiosity;



Dawson and his dad, Steve at our Family Dance.

- Increased exploration of the world around them;
- Less hesitance and fear in new situations;
- Greater tolerance for stress and frustration;
- More willingness to try new things.

Father involvement increases cognitive abilities in young children:

- Higher verbal skills;
- Higher scores on assessments of cognitive competence;
- Daughter's increased competence in math;
- Son's IQ is related to father's nurturing.



*When fathers are involved,
Their children learn more,
perform better in school, and
exhibit healthier behaviour.*

P r o g r a m U p d a t e s

Physio/Occupational Therapy

-Maureen Thiel, Edie Watt & Marie Shabits

Now that our accreditation visit is safely done, we're looking forward to spending more time with children and families. Summer is nearly upon us, and we'll begin to schedule our visits to fit around your holidays and ours. At least one of us will be in most days during the summer, so if you need any help or info, please give a call. We will also look forward to connecting with many of you at the summer Thursdays in the Parks program.

Edie has successfully completed a Distance Learning course on adult learning. It included preparing and presenting a workshop. Seventeen community caregivers and preschool teachers have registered for the 2 session course – **“Movement Made Fun With Ordinary Things.”** The handouts include a collection of fun low – cost games, and we hope to add a collection of the ideas that we glean from all the participants. **We will aim to have the package available for families soon – ask your therapist or at the front desk.**

Have a great summer!

Infant Development Program

-Susan Wells & Denise Wright

The month of June is upon us...we can't believe it! Another year is winding down. It has been an exceptionally busy year for us with all that was required for our Accreditation Survey. We'd like to say thanks to all of the families who lost out on some home visiting that would have typically been more consistent. We look forward to getting back to more regular visits.

In the meantime, there have been playgroups happening every week and lots of participation in them. Throughout the year we have had **3 Mother Goose groups, 6 Let's Play 2-year old groups, and the Thursday drop in group, Connections.** We also organized some “special” population groups to help parents meet with other parents and their children with “like” disabilities.



Braden and Tyler getting to know one another...

Summertime will see me, Susan, working during July, and Denise working in August. Please feel free to call either of us if you want some assistance when your Consultant is away.

Thursdays in the Park will be a great way for all of us to stay connected in the summer months and we invite all of you to come and join us when you can. See you there with bells on! Happy summer to all!

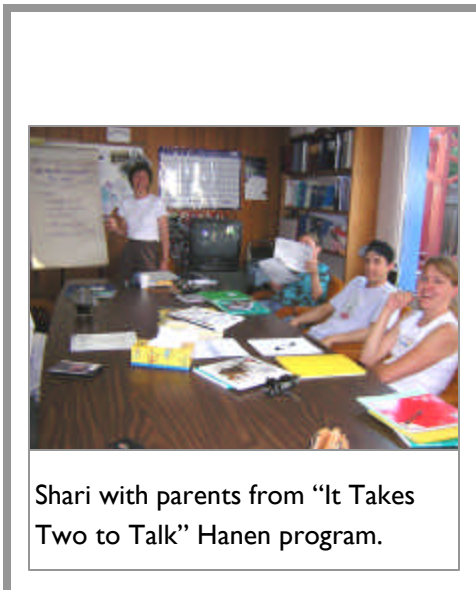
P r o g r a m U p d a t e s

Speech & Language Program

-Shari Shabits & Holley Ney

Staffing:

The good news is that **Shari Shabits** has been back to full-time hours since the beginning of April. She is still working hard to catch up on the backlog of new referrals since September, and plans to dedicate July to this goal. So if you haven't heard from her yet, you will in the next



Shari with parents from "It Takes Two to Talk" Hanen program.

month. Shari will be taking holidays in August.

The bad news is that **Holley Ney** has decided to move on. Her

last day of work will be June 30. We will be very sad to see her go. Holley came to us just last September; she stepped into an unfamiliar setting with very little orientation and support while Shari was off. She rose to the challenge with enthusiasm and dedication, and always gave her best. We will all miss her positive attitude and creative ideas. Holley would like the families and staff she has worked with to know how much she has enjoyed her time here. Thank you, Holley, and we wish you well.

Holley's resignation may mean that the SLP program will again be temporarily understaffed. However, we are hopeful that we can fill her position by September.



Accreditation: The

survey has come and gone, and we are catching our breath! The surveyors were very friendly and interested in our programs and services. Shari took one of them, Becky Gepner, on a home visit, which was well received. Thank you again to **Kelly Burden** and his daughter **Emily**, who opened their home to a stranger, and freely shared thoughts and experiences. Coincidentally, Becky is also a Speech/Language Pathologist (all the way from Ann Arbor, Michigan!) so it was very interesting to compare notes with her. All in all, we found the survey to be a very positive and valuable experience. We gained many good suggestions on how to enhance our services to families.

Check out the **updated SLP page** on the NONA website! We've added several links, articles and tips on a variety of topics, intended to help you understand and help your child's communication. Watch for more to be added over the next year.

Have a great summer, everyone, and see you in September!

P r o g r a m U p d a t e s

Supported Child Development Program

-Darlene Wolsey, Laurie Russell, Shirley McGee,
Tracey Greatrex, Lorri Hutchinson

Resource Library: The Resource Library will be available in the summer by appointment. Please call your SCD Consultant or ask for the SCD Program if you would like to borrow items from the Library. Scheduled hours will be available again in the fall. SCD staff would appreciate feed-back on resources available, times that are convenient to access and if there are resources that you would like to see available. Please call, write or e-mail us with your feed-back.

The Family Barbeque took place on May 31st. It was great to see all the families that braved the very uncertain weather to join us. Fun was had by all – visit our NONA website for pictures.

Advisory Committees: (LAC) **PARENTS we need your help!**

All SCD Programs in the province will be establishing LAC'S. The **Local Advisory Committee** membership will include parents of children in SCD, community partners and professionals, and representation from the Ministry of Child and Family Development. The LAC will assist the agency in reaching the goals of the Supported Child Development Program. **If you are interested in being a part of this committee, or would like more information please con-**

tact Darlene Wolsey, Manager, SCD Program at NONA. The **Provincial Advisory Committee** is looking for a parent from the interior to participate on the **Provincial Committee**. Travel, accommodation and childcare expenses would be covered. Meetings are held about four times a year in Vancouver/Richmond – if you are interested or would like more information please call Darlene.



Darlene Wolsey, SCD Program Manager with Marilou Parchomchuk, MCFD Liaison

Workshops for Child Care Providers held in April and May were well attended. Planning for fall workshops is underway – if you have some suggestions please call us or let your SCD Consultant know.

GOODBYE TO MARILOU PARCHOM-CHUK

– Marilou will no longer be providing eligibility and child care subsidy information to families as of June 30, 2004. Marilou has been the Ministry liaison to the SCD Program for 9 years. We will miss her and have appreciated her continuous support to families, child care providers and SCD staff. **Referrals will be made directly to us and eligibility will be determined by the SCD Program Manager.** Eligibility requirements have not changed; families need to provide written documentation from a professional describing their child's developmental concerns to NONA. Referral forms are available by calling office staff at 549 1281.

ACCREDITATION: The onsite survey team was at NONA May 20th and 21st. The agency

staff received many positive comments from the survey team on their exit – accredited status, suggestions and recommendations are yet to be received.

SUMMERTIME: The Supported Child Development staff wish you all a healthy summer with lots of fun and time to enjoy the many recreational opportunities in our community. Come join us during for **Thursdays in the Sun**. Staff will be on vacation at various times, if you are unable to reach your Consultant please call the office and ask to speak to the SCD Consultant who is available.



Breanna and her mom, Lynne enjoy the recent SCC Family BBQ.

hands. We encourage you to take this time to play...go to the beach, to the park, or for a walk. Relax and have fun with your child. Remember to add some structured activities into your day too...crafts or games. The structure will help reduce your child's anxiety when other things in life are changing.

During the approaching summer the EIBI program will also be seeing a lot of change. I have returned from my maternity leave just in time to catch up before **Charlene Minsky-Thomas** leaves us to go on her maternity leave. We wish her oodles of happy moments with her new baby to be and look forward to her return next spring.

Music Therapy Program

-Heather Todd

During the month of June, those of you whose children receive Music therapy will be asked your feedback about the quality of this program, as well as other suggestions that you might have to improve music therapy services. If you have not been contacted, and would like to add your two cents, call Maureen Thiel at 549-1281 extension 204.

EIBI Program

-Josie Pfrimmer

Summer is coming and with it comes change. Children will be finishing up with preschool/ kindergarten and have lots of spare time on their

There will be three children leaving the EIBI program, two of which are planning to enter the **Extended Autism Initiative Program (EAI)**. The EAI Program has been running with great success for a few months now. During the summer months we will be working on expanding this program to include options for older children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. This is another exciting time for the EIBI department.

Respite Care Program

-Margaret Hudson & the Respite Care Team

At the time of press, Margaret is undergoing



surgery. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Family Support Program

-Lorraine Donald

Summer is here! Accreditation preparation is over! The Family Support Program would like to thank the families for being so understanding of time I needed to spend preparing for Accreditation. The Accreditation experience was great and I am hoping to make a few changes to the program to improve services to families. One of my goals is to set aside some time to contact families by phone to just check in to see how things are going.

With summer upon us, the Family Support Program will slow down some, since I will be taking holidays, however the program is still readily available to offer a wide range of support services if families require assistance over the summer months when I am not on holidays.

I plan to take part in the family events on Thursdays and will be at the Family Barbecue at Kin Beach. I am also planning to put on a Sibs Workshop with Heather Todd (Music Therapist) if families are interested.



The meetings for the two Parent Support and Educational Groups will be scheduled less frequently over the summer months. Members will be notified regarding dates. Regular scheduled meetings will re-

sume in September. I'd like to thank the regular members of the Support Groups for your attendance, sharing, and laughter at our meetings. You demonstrate the value and importance of families



Sterling and Ben share a laugh at the recent SCC BBQ. connecting with each other. **You are a very powerful tool in helping each other, thanks again.**

The two parent groups (1) For Parents of children with Special Needs and (2) for Parents with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders always welcome new members, so come out and join us and/or take in one of educational topics.

In the fall, Family Support Program will be hosting a series of educational meetings and/or workshops. Topics will be posted.

The Family Support Program would also like to thank all the NONA families for your part in my life and would like to wish you a great summer.

Reminder: All families of children with special need (birth to 18years of age) can access the Family Support Program for support and information by phoning me at 549-1281 ext. 215 or my email family.support@nona-cdc.com.

What Siblings Would Like Parents and Service Providers to Know...

The following article is from *The Sibling Support Program of the Arc of the United States*.

(www.thearc.org/siblingsupport/pub-whattoknow) .

Brothers and sisters will be in the lives of family members with special needs longer than **anyone**. Brothers and sisters will be there after parents are gone and special education services are a distant memory. If they are provided with support and information, they can help their sibs live dignified lives from childhood to their senior years.

Throughout their lives, brothers and sisters share many of the concerns that parents of children with special needs experience, including isolation, a need for information, guilt, concerns about the future, and care giving demands. Brothers and sisters also face issues that are uniquely theirs including resentment, peer issues, embarrassment, and pressure to achieve.

The **Sibling Support Project** facilitated a discussion on SibNet, a listserv for adult siblings of people with disabilities, regarding the considerations that siblings want from parents, other family members, and service providers. Below is a discussion of themes discussed by SibNet members and recommendations from the Sibling Support Project:

The Right to One's Own Life.

Throughout their lives, brothers and sisters may play many different roles in the lives of their siblings who have special needs. Parents and service providers should not make assumptions about responsibilities typically-developing siblings may

assume without a frank and open discussion. "Nothing about us without us" -- a phrase popular with self-advocates who have disabilities -- applies to siblings as well. Self-determination, after all, is for everyone -- including brothers and sisters.



Annie and her big sister, Emma

Acknowledging Siblings' Concerns.

Like parents, brothers and sisters will experience a wide array of often ambivalent emotions regarding the impact of their sibling's special needs. These feelings should be both expected and acknowledged by parents and other family mem-

bers and service providers. Because most siblings will have the longest-lasting relationship with the family member who has a disability, these concerns will change over time.

Expectations for Typically-Developing Siblings.

Families need to set high expectations for all their children. However, some typically-developing brothers and sisters react to their siblings' disability by setting unrealistically high expectations for themselves -- and some feel that they must somehow compensate for their siblings' special needs. Parents can help their typically-developing children by conveying clear expectations and unconditional support.

Expect Typical Behavior from Typically-Developing Siblings.

Although difficult for parents to watch, teasing, name-calling, arguing and other forms of conflict are common among most brothers and sisters -- even when one has special needs. While parents may be appalled at siblings' harshness toward one another, much of this conflict can be a beneficial part of normal social development. When conflict arises, the message sent to many brothers and sisters is, "Leave your sibling alone. You are bigger, you are stronger, you should know better. It is your job to compromise." Typically-developing siblings deserve a life where they, like other children, sometimes misbehave, get angry, and fight with their siblings.

Expectations for the Family Member with Special Needs.

When families have high expectations for their children who have special needs, everyone will

benefit. To the extent possible, parents should have the same expectations for the child with special needs regarding chores and personal responsibility as they do for their typically-developing children. Not only will similar expectations foster independence, it will also minimize the resentment expressed by siblings when there are two sets of rules -- one for them, and another for their sibs who have special needs.

The Right to a Safe Environment.

Some siblings live with brothers and sisters who have challenging behaviors. Other siblings assume responsibilities for themselves and their siblings that go beyond their age level and place all parties in vulnerable situations. Siblings deserve to have their own personal safety given as much importance as the family member who has special needs.

Opportunities to Meet Peers.

For most parents, the thought of "going it alone", raising a child with special needs without the benefit of knowing another parent in a similar situation would be unthinkable. Yet, this routinely happens to brothers and sisters. Efforts must be made to offer siblings the common-sense support and validation that parents get from parent support groups. Brothers and sisters -- like parents -- like to know that they are not alone with their unique joys and concerns.

Opportunities to Obtain Information.

Throughout their lives, brothers and sisters have an ever-changing need for information about their sibling's disability, and its treatment and implications. Parents *and* service providers have an obligation to proactively provide siblings with

helpful information. Any agency that represents a specific disability or illness and prepares materials for parents and other adults should prepare materials for siblings and young readers as well.

Sibs' Concerns about the Future.

Early in life, many brothers and sisters worry about what obligations they will have toward their sibling in the days to come. Ways parents can reassure their typically-developing children are to make plans for the future of their children with special needs, involve and listen to their typically-developing children as they make these plans, consider backup plans, and know that siblings' attitude toward the extent of their involvement as adults may change over time. When brothers and sisters are "brought into the loop" and given the message early that they have their parents' blessing to pursue their dreams, their future involvement with their sibling will be a choice instead of an obligation.

Including Both Sons and Daughters.

Just as daughters are usually the family members who care for aging parents, adult sisters are usually the family members who look after the family member with special needs when the parents no longer can. Serious exploration of sharing responsibilities among siblings -- including brothers -- should be considered.

Communication.

While good communication between parents and children is always important, it is especially important in families where there is a child who has special needs.

One-on-One Time with Parents.

Children need to know that their parents care about them as individuals. When parents carve time out of a busy schedule to grab a bite at a local burger joint or window shop at the mall with their typically-developing children, it conveys a message that parents "are there" for them as well and provides an excellent opportunity to talk about a wide range of topics.

Celebrate Every Child's Achievements and Milestones.

Over the years, we've met siblings whose parents did not attend their high school graduation -- even when their children were valedictorians -- because the parents were unable to leave their child with special needs. We've also met siblings whose wedding plans were dictated by the needs of their sibling who had a disability. One child's special needs should not overshadow another's achievements and milestones. Families who seek respite resources, strive for flexibility, and seek creative solutions can help assure that the accomplishments of all family members are celebrated.

Parents' Perspective is More Important than the Actual Disability.

Parents would be wise to remember that the parents' interpretation of their child's disability will be a greater influence on the adaptation of their typically developing sibling than the actual disability itself. When parents seek support, information, and respite for themselves, they model resilience and healthy attitudes and behaviors for their typically-developing children.

Include Siblings in the Definition of "Family".

Many educational, health care, and social service agencies profess a desire to offer family-centered services but continue to overlook the family members who will have the longest-lasting relationship with the person who has the special needs -- the sisters and brothers. When brothers and sisters receive the considerations and services they deserve, agencies can claim to offer "family-centered" -- instead of "parent-centered" -- services.

Actively Reach Out to Brothers and Sisters.

Parents and agency personnel should consider inviting (but not requiring) brothers and sisters to attend meetings about their brother or sister with special needs. Siblings frequently have legitimate questions that can be answered by service providers. Brothers and sisters also have informed opinions and perspectives and can make positive contributions to the child's team.

If you would like more information about support for the siblings in your family, please contact Lorraine at 549-1281 .



Mother Goose Corner



Tick Tock

(Child stands and sways back & forth. For a baby, parent holds baby up and moves them like a pendulum)

Tick tock tick tock

Listen to the kitchen clock

Tick tock tick tock

Now I'm going to make you stop!

Fun Rhyme for the Change Table:

Charlie Chaplin went to France

To teach the ladies how to dance

First they did the rhumba *(circle child's legs one way)*

Then they did the kicks

Then they did the samba *(circle child's legs other way)*

And then they did the splits!

Sleeping Bunnies

See the sleeping bunnies

Sleeping until noon

Shall we wake them with this happy tune?

Oh, so still, are they ill?

Wake up, wake up little bunnies

Hop little bunnies, hop, hop, hop

Stop little bunnies, Stop! Stop! Stop!