

# Ontario Early Years Centre

## Monthly Newsletter



Volume 7, Issue 9 May 2010

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### Ontario Early Years Centres



*A Place For Parents And Their Children.*

#### Helping Children Build a Solid Foundation

**CROW** is dedicated to supporting and strengthening childcare, family life, child development and community links in Lanark County

Website: [www.crowoeyc.ca](http://www.crowoeyc.ca)

Children's Resources on Wheels is a United Way Member Agency.



### Community Early Childhood Screening Clinics

If you have a child between the ages of birth and 5 years old and have questions about your child's behaviour, development, hearing, vision, learning, attention, readiness for school or speech and language, please join us at one of our drop-in clinics in your community.

We offer parents and their children a free 15-20 minute visit with an early childhood professional to talk about their questions or concerns.

The clinics are as follows:

**Lanark:** Maple Grove School, 151 George Street,  
May 11 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**Smiths Falls:** St. James the Greater Catholic School , 5 Catherine Street  
May 18 9 – 11:30 a.m.

**There is no charge for these screenings.** You do not need to make an appointment. Visits are on a first come first served basis.

Contact Monica Dando 613-257-7121 ext 247 or 1-800-667-2617 ext 247.

We are happy to share our playroom space with the Public Health Baby Talk program on Wednesday afternoons.

Wondering about kindergarten this fall? We will be holding free discussion groups on Getting Ready for Kindergarten at schools around the county. Check out the announcement page on our website ([www.crowoeyc.ca](http://www.crowoeyc.ca)) for locations and dates at a school near you.

**Please Note: We will be closed May 24 for the Victoria Day holiday.**

We are looking for two new CROW board members. If you are interested in serving on our board please contact Sue Cavanagh 613-283-0095.

Quote by Forest Witcraft: **“One Hundred years from now it will not matter what kind of house you lived in... what kind of car you drove... what your bank balance was... but what will matter is that you were important in the life of a child.**



**The Ontario Early Years Centre & Licensed Child Care are programs of Children's Resources on Wheels (CROW)**

**Provider's Page**  
Submitted by CROW Licensed Child Care

## From Hitting To Words

The climate of zero tolerance for violence has made us very sensitive to physical aggression, even in very young children. Sometimes, parents and caregivers feel there's something seriously wrong if toddlers push and shove other children at playgroup. In fact, it's normal for babies and young children to communicate with their bodies. As part of growing up, they learn it's not OK to hurt other people and that there are better ways to interact socially.

### **Is this normal?**

A study on a very large number of children in Canada found "physical aggressions starts at about 9 months and peaks between 27-29 months, when 53.3 percent of boys and 41.1 percent of girls try it out. By about age 3, most children learn to use alternative, prosocial strategies rather than physical aggression." For some children, it may take longer. In particular children who are slow to speak are more likely to hit, bite and grab toys. Until their language skills catch up, they count on action to get their message across.

### **Minimizing aggression**

The toddler who hits or bites at playgroup shouldn't be treated in the same way as the Grade 3 bully who starts a fist fight in the school yard. And a two year old who grabs a toy from a younger child won't necessarily end up intimidating classmates in highschool. But parents and caregivers still can't ignore the behaviour. They can act to:

- Prevent the conditions which lead to aggression
- Supervise and redirect play where necessary
- Teach social skills
- Give children chances to practice

### **Prevention**

Children are more likely to push and grab when they feel crowded, overstimulated and stressed. If you see a child who has trouble controlling physical aggression in a group, check for these factors:

- ¶ Too many people in a small space?
- ¶ A room set-up that encourages disorganized running around? (better done outdoors)
- ¶ A high noise level, echoing off walls and ceiling?
- ¶ Not enough toys for the number of children?
- ¶ Expectations that children sit still for a long time?
- ¶ Bad timing in the child's routine? (children who are hungry and tired lose control more quickly).

If you can't change the environment or the schedule, maybe you could shorten the time the child spends in the group. But don't give up on all group experiences; progress comes with practice.

### **Supervision**

You may be looking forward to socializing with other parents and providers at playgroup, but don't expect babies or toddlers to manage on their own for long. You need to stay close so you can see when to join in the game. Sometimes little ones need you to smooth out the rough spots for them. Be ready to pick up your child and start playing with another toy across the room.

### **Teaching**

Gradually, children learn to communicate with language instead of actions. You can help by giving them the words they need to use:

- Words for asking – "now it's my turn."
  - Words for inviting – "you can play with us."
  - Words for understanding – "I think Ty wants to play with the train too."
- You should rehearse some of these words before your child goes to play with others.

### **Practice**

At first, babies and toddlers practice taking turns and sharing toys by playing with parents and caregivers. They are more patient than their friends! They will also learn by interacting in a group of other children, especially if they see the same children week after week. They get comfortable together and learn to interpret each other's cues. Over time and with adult guidance, the physically aggressive children gradually start using other strategies; the timid children learn to stand up for themselves.

### **Learning takes time**

Like any skill, learning to get along with other people takes time. Even if learning doesn't go smoothly at first, don't give up. With prevention, supervision, teaching and practice, your persistence will pay off.

## Literacy Page

### Giving Your Child A Great Start For Life – Getting Ready For Kindergarten

#### Talking and Getting Along

Make *eye contact* with your child.

1. **Stop** what you are doing.
2. **Look** at me, and I will look at you.
3. **Listen**.

Being at eye level tells them you are interested in them and what they have to say.

Talk and listen to your child. Ask them questions about things.

Read to your child as often as you can. Read stories, poems, nursery rhymes.

Sing Songs.

Tell stories to your child and let your child tell stories to you.

Play games.

**Opposites:** What's the opposite of...(hot, big, under, etc)

**Names:** Point things out, "is this the sink or the stove?" See how many things in the room they can name.

**I spy with my little eye:** Let your child guess what you describe.

**Echo or telephone:** Say something funny, a rhyme, a sentence and whisper it in their ear. Have them whisper it in someone's ear.

**Instructions:** Tell your child two or three things to do, one at a time, make them simple and/or funny. When your child can remember three instructions try four.

#### How To Help Your Child Get Along With Others:

- ⇒ Teach your child to use **words for their feelings** like—"I'm mad!" "I'm sad!" "I'm frustrated!"
- ⇒ Talk about taking deep breaths, counting to 10, talk about how he/she feels and what he/she thinks he/she should do, tell him/her what makes you feel better when you are upset
- ⇒ Give your children lots of opportunities to be with other children
- ⇒ Play school with your child
- ⇒ Play games with your child. This helps your child learn how to share, take turns and cooperate.

## Parenting Page

### Handy Phrases for Parents

Do you ever think of what you wish you'd said to your children...after the moment's gone by? Here are a few good lines to help parents and caregivers. These phrases give children a model of how to clearly assert one's position in a respectful way. They also encourage the development of problem-solving skills and build self-esteem. Best of all, they are words you won't mind hearing when your child uses them back to you.

#### Planning for improvement

Faced with misbehaviour, parents often ask "why did you do that?" (Depending on the tone of voice, this may sound to the child like an attack – "how could you have been so stupid/inconsiderate/disrespectful?") The question "why?" directs the child's attention to defending his/her past actions. By asking instead, "**how could you avoid this happening again next time?**", you put the emphasis on making a plan to do a better job in the future.

#### Taking the pressure off

Children often spring requests on you when they know you're in a rush. They hope you'll say yes, just to avoid a long discussion. Don't get trapped into making a snap decision about something you really haven't considered before. You can say, "**this is something I have to think about and I'll let you know later.**" If the decision has to be made right away, of course, later will be too late. They will learn to ask you earlier next time.

#### Teaching decision-making

When children are young, start letting them in on the process you go through to make up your mind about the requests. Take them through the advantages /disadvantages of different possibilities and explain what's behind your decisions. Don't expect them to agree with you, but they'll see you have a method. As they become familiar with the process, they can do it themselves. Then when they ask to do something, you can say, "**convince me this is a good idea,**" and eventually, when they're older, "**I need to know your plan.**"

#### Keeping on topic

Does your child say, "you never buy me anything I want," when all you did was refuse to buy one more video game? Learn to short circuit arguments by refocusing the discussion in the present: "**That might be, but we're talking about just one thing now.**" Children can also use this technique to divert your attention away from misbehaviour and towards whatever subject they know will hook you into talking. Have you ever heard, "you don't love me as much as my brother." Avoid getting distracted by saying, "**right now the subject is what just happened. We'll talk about love another time.**"

#### Overcoming discouragement

When a discouraged child says "I can't do this; I'm just no good", the parent reflex kick in-"of course you can. Just try harder. A more helpful response would be to acknowledge the feeling and propose a strategy to break an overwhelming task into smaller pieces: "**this isn't easy for you, what part might you be able to do?**"

#### Offering Support

We may try to give children choices in daily activities but some things are not negotiable. Even if vaccinations are painful, they have to be given; even if her children will miss her, Mom has to go on her business trip. Instead of saying it won't hurt, try a firm and supportive approach. "**I know you're not looking forward to this. What could we do to make you more comfortable?**"

#### Showing appreciation

People, children included, like to feel they're appreciated, even for the things they do routinely. Be sure your repertoire of handy phrases includes, "**Thank you. That really helps me out.**" If you let your children know you notice the things they do right, in time, you may even hear them saying thank you to you in return.

--adapted from The Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs sheet

## Gardening Together

People who grow up on farms know we need to look after the Earth because that's where our food comes from. If your children think their food comes from the store, maybe it's time to introduce them to gardening. Children are natural gardeners. They're curious, like to learn by doing, and love to play in the dirt. In a garden, the satisfaction that comes from caring for something over time. When you do it with the children, you're building your relationship at the same time you're building environmental awareness.

### What to Plant

When you decide what to grow, remember children will be more interested and satisfied if they are getting good results. Choose plants that grow relatively quickly and easily and that your children will have fun harvesting. Here are some suggestions:

**Sunflowers** – plant just one or two, since they take a lot of room. Be sure to choose the type grown for food, so you can roast and eat the dried seeds in the fall.

**Lettuce** – plant a kind your children will like to put in their salad.

**Radishes** – Radish sprouts poke up in 3-10 days after planting. They're ready to eat in 3-4 weeks.

**Snow peas** – Snow peas are a quick growing crop, fun for kids to eat right off the vine, pod and all.

**Cherry tomatoes** – Buy little plants instead of starting from seeds and you will have tomatoes in 50-75 days, just the right size to pop in your mouth.

**Carrots and potatoes** – Root vegetables teach patience since they take longer to mature and the edible part is hidden. Choose small varieties of carrots – they are easier to grown and more fun to eat. Red varieties of potatoes mature faster.

**Pumpkins** – If you have room, pumpkins are a must. Seeds can be dried to eat, the flesh used for pies and muffins and the pumpkin for carving at Halloween.

### Tips for gardening with children

Give each child his or her **own separate space**. Keep it small, very small for young kids. Set them up for success by putting their plots where they get the best soil and light.

Convert an outgrown **sandbox** to a garden bed. This gives the child continued “ownership” of a familiar space and encourages a sense of responsibility.

Let them use **real tools** instead of plastic ones which break easily and frustrate the children.

Involve children **from start to finish**. Besides planting and nurturing their garden beds, be sure they pick and prepare their crop for the table, no matter how small the harvest. They will learn that gardening, as well as being fun, gives them a chance to contribute to the family's well-being.

As much as possible, **start from seeds**. Children will learn more about the growing process by caring for their sprouting

Depending on the age of your child, you may need to **help behind the scenes**. You may be the one to go out in the evening to pick a few slugs off the lettuce, or to move the sprinkler. They don't have to know about all the help you offer; the main thing is they feel the plot is theirs.

When friends visit, be sure to point out the children's gardens. Take a photo of their harvest and send it to the grandparents. The attention you give to their work motivates children to stay involved with a project.

### Other ways

If you don't have access to a garden plot, don't let that stop you. Many plants (cherry tomatoes, lettuce, radishes) can be grown in containers on a balcony. Just remember to water often. If you don't have a balcony, you can put pots on a sunny windowsill and grow parsley and chives to add to your salads.

And if you want to observe nature with your children, pick a patch of garden in the neighbourhood, the local part or a vacant lot. Visit it together often, from early spring to late fall and spend time noticing how it has changed since you last walked by. Take pictures, compare heights, get excited when a bud has burst into bloom. Share the wonder of nature with your children and connect with the Earth that nourishes us all.

## Songs, fingerplays and crafts

### Mother's Day is May 9

**Bath Salts for Mom**  
 Mix some Epsom salts with a drop or two of food colouring. Add some fragrance. Decorate a jar to put the bath salts into. If you wish you could cover the jar with a lace doily with ribbon tied around it for a lid.  
 If you still live at home with your Mom it would be a **REAL** treat if you scrubbed out the tub for her and allowed her 45 minutes **ALONE** in the tub.

**Spiced Tea Mix**  
 Combine three parts instant orange breakfast drink (Tang), to one part instant ice tea. Let the children fill a jar with the drink mix. Screw the lid on tight. You can add a precut fabric circle over the lid and secure it with a rubber band. Attach a card with these directions: Mix 1 heaping teaspoon drink mix with 1 cup hot or cold water for a delicious orange beverage.

#### April Showers Bring May Flowers

**Garden Song** (tune: Old McDonald Had a Farm)  
 Old McDonald had a garden, E-I-E-I-O  
 In his garden he had to plant, E-I-E-I-O  
 With a plant-a-seed here and a plant-a-seed there  
 Here a seed, there a seed, everywhere a garden seed.  
 Old McDonald had a garden, E-I-E-I-O  
 (continue with the following verses)  
 In his garden he had to water, E-I-E-I-O  
 Sprinkle, sprinkle here, sprinkle, sprinkle there...

In his garden he had to hoe, E-I-E-I-O  
 Chop, chop here, chop, chop there....

In his garden he had to pick, E-I-E-I-O  
 Pick-a-carrot here, pick a lettuce there  
 Here a bean, there a corn, everywhere a garden plant.  
 Old McDonald had a garden, E-I-E-I-O

**I Love My Mommy** (sung to: Up on the Housetop)  
 I love my mommy, Yessirree!  
 She is very good to me!  
 She makes me cookies and yummy treats,  
 That's my mom and she's real neat!  
 Oh, oh, oh, who wouldn't know,  
 Oh, oh, oh, who wouldn't know,  
 I love my mommy and she loves me,  
 That's the way it's supposed to be!



**Hunt For Seeds**  
 Put a selection of fruits and vegetables out. Ask the children to tell you which items have seeds inside them (or outside them in the case of strawberries). Have the children sort them into seed and no seed piles. Open them up to see what you find out. (Keep the seeds for other activities). Slice the fruits and vegetables and enjoy!

**Fingerplay**  
 Little seed in the ground below (form your bodies into balls)  
 Felt the heat of the warm sun's glow (rub hands over arms)  
 Heard the raindrops pitter patter (place hand behind ear)  
 Wondered why the birds did chatter  
 (place hand on head as if pondering)  
 So the seed began to grow (begin to rise)  
 And poked it's head up very slow (lift head)  
 What it saw was such a sight (rub eyes)  
 The plant was in a garden bright! (throw arms apart)

**Playgroups**

Day	Location	Time	Staff	Dates
Monday	Almonte – Holy Name of Mary	10:00 - 11:30	Linda	May 3, 10, 17, 31
Monday	Beckwith – Beckwith Town Hall	9:30 – 11:30	Leanne	May 3, 10, 17, 31
Monday	Carleton Place – St. Gregory	10:00 – 11:30	Issie	May 3, 10, 17, 31
Monday	Perth – Old Stewart School	9:30 – 11:30	Jane	May 3, 10, 17, 31
Monday	Smiths Falls	9:00 – 11:00	Lori	May 3, 10, 17, 31
Tuesday	Almonte – Naismith School	9:30 – 11:00	Linda	May 4, 11, 18, 25
Tuesday	Carleton Place - Arena	10:00 – 11:30	Issie	May 4, 11, 18, 25
Tuesday	Lanark	9:30 – 11:30	Jane	May 4, 11, 18, 25
Tuesday	Montague –Old Smiths Falls Highschool	9:30 – 11:00	Leanne	May 4, 11, 18, 25
Tuesday	Smiths Falls	9:00 – 11:00 4:30 – 6:30	Lori	May 4, 11, 18, 25
Wednesday	Carleton Place – St. Gregory	10:00 – 11:30	Issie	May 5, 12, 19, 26
Wednesday	Lanark	9:30 – 11:30	Jane	May 5, 12, 19, 26
Wednesday	Ramsay	10:00 – 11:30	Linda/Janet	May 5, 12, 19, 26
Wednesday	Smiths Falls	9:00 – 11:00	Lori	May 5, 12, 19, 26
Thursday	Carleton Place - Arena	10:00 – 11:30	Issie	May 6, 13, 20, 27
Thursday	Clayton	10:00 – 11:30	Linda	May 6, 13, 20, 27
Thursday	Perth – Old Stewart School	9:30 – 11:30	Leanne	May 6, 13, 20, 27
Thursday	Smiths Falls – old High School	9:30 – 11:30	Lori	May 6, 13, 20, 27
Thursday	Smiths Falls	9:00 – 11:00	Parent run	May 6, 13, 20, 27
Thursday	Perth – St. James Anglican Church	4:30 – 7 p.m.	Peter	May 6, 13, 27
Friday	Smiths Falls	9:00 – 11:00	Parent run	May 7, 14, 21, 28

**Please Note: No playgroups May 24**

***Food Sensitivities: Playgroup participants!! Please avoid bringing snack foods that contain or may contain traces of nuts.***

**Workshops**

**Topic:** Book and Blanket  
**Place:** Holy Name of Mary School, Almonte  
  
**Topic:** Book and Blanket  
**Place:** Glen Tay Public School, Perth

**Date:** Tuesday, May 11  
**Time:** 6 – 7 p.m.  
  
**Date:** Thursday, May 27  
**Time:** 6 – 7 p.m.

**Pre-registration is necessary. Please call 283-0095 or 1-800-267-9252 to register.**

The Back Page

**Dad’s Playgroup for children ages 0 – 6 years.**

Come out for some fun play, activities, supper and circle time.  
 Please join us on Thursdays at St. James Anglican Church in Perth from 4:30 – 7 p.m.  
 We will be in the gym of the church. Please contact Peter McCracken 613-264-1458  
 or by email at [peter.dad1@yahoo.ca](mailto:peter.dad1@yahoo.ca). No playgroup April 15.

<b>Children’s Resources on Wheels Staff</b>	
<b>Ontario Early Years Centre</b>	<b>Licensed Child Care</b>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>EXT</b></p> <p>Diane Bennett, Administrative Assistant.....313            Kathy Boelsma, Early Literacy.....312            Emily Cassell, Data Analysis .....316            Sue Cavanagh, Executive Director.....303            Linda Cybulski, Playgroup Facilitator .....304            Leanne Dwyer, Playgroup Facilitator .....318            Janet Wheeler Lackey, Resource .....311            Linda Lalonde, Reception .....300            Deb McGuire, Parent Ed.....307            Issie Mullen, Playgroup Facilitator.....311            Jane Paul, Playgroup Facilitator .....305            Lori Wintle, Playgroup Facilitator .....310</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EXT</b></p> <p>Kelli Cassidy, Director ..... 309            Sherry Harder, Administrative Assistant ..... 301            Janice LePage, Home Visitor ..... 306</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lanark County Child Care Programs</b></p> <p>Licensed Home Child Care offers home based care throughout Lanark County for children ages 6 weeks – 12 years.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Caregivers Needed</b></p> <p>We are currently taking applications throughout Lanark County. Contact us for more information.</p>

**Ontario Early Years Centre/Children’s Resources on Wheels (CROW)**  
 91 Cornelia Street West, Suite 118 Box 25 Smiths Falls, ON K7A 5L3  
 Phone: (613)283-0095, 1-800-267-9252, Fax: (613)283-3324  
 Email: [oeyclanark@bellnet.ca](mailto:oeyclanark@bellnet.ca), [hcccrow@bellnet.ca](mailto:hcccrow@bellnet.ca)  
 Website: [www.crowoeyc.ca](http://www.crowoeyc.ca)