



Parents Club Update

Here are two Parents Club updates that we received recently. Please keep in touch during the year ahead so that we can continue to share your great stories in upcoming newsletters.

Tsawout First Nation Parent's Club

We have officially started our Parents Club in Tsawout. We had our first of many gatherings last week.

For our meeting we served a nutritious meal and did sequencing with our SENCOTEN language teacher. Our group decided they would like to meet weekly and that will take place after the SENCOTEN class on Wednesdays. We had 6 parents and 3 Head Start staff that attended the meeting. We were pleased with the turn out.

Our group will be meeting again today and we will be working on and creating collages of our families. We will spend a few weeks getting to know each other. Although most everyone knows each other, we are hoping to get to know each other in a deeper way, which might involve such reflective questions as "what do you like about being a parent?" "what do you find the most challenging about being a parent?" "what have you learned from your children?" and "what types of teachings do you pass down to your children?"

We will be connecting a Community Kitchen with our Parents Club. We have booked our first community

kitchen for August 9th, and we will be first picking and then making and canning blackberry jam.

We are excited about the Club. Our parents seem keen and committed to being part of it. Last week their reflective question was to think about what they would like the Parent's Club to look like. We will let you know what they come up with.

Ang Hamilton, Club Coordinator, August 2005

Anishenabee Place Parent's Club

I'd like to take this opportunity to write this letter as an expression of our gratitude at Anishenabee Place / Aboriginal Services. Our services are an extension of the Ministry for Children and Family Development for the Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge/Katzie First Nation.

We're all so excited when those boxes arrive, everyone gathers around as I open them up. Continued support of the First Nations Parents Club has assisted us in the best possible programming for all services offered at Anishenabee Place. Here's an example of the programs affected by your generosity: Aboriginal Parenting Classes, Women's Support

Group, Sizzling Chef's Program, Youth Tool Time, and Family Strengthening.

Co-locating with MCFD sometimes brings unexpected visitors. Just the other day children were brought into care. I have to say the games really kept them occupied and carefree for quite awhile. We thank you for that.

Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Connie Bailey, Project Supervisor, June 2005

Please Help Us Keep in Touch

With another new year getting started, we are once again asking for your help in making our management of the Parents Club as effective as possible.

This month, your Club will receive a Parent Club Membership Renewal Form. This form is meant to ensure that we have up-to-date contact information for each Club. We also need to know the correct number of members so that we order enough materials for everyone.

Please have someone from your club complete the renewal form and return it to the Parents Club office as soon as possible. That will help us do our best to serve you well.

FIRST NATIONS PARENTS CLUB



BULLETIN

SEPT 2005, ISSUE 1, VOL 8

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Contact Us!

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Hello Again Parents Club Members

Hello First Nations Parents Club members. We hope that you all had a wonderful summer and you're having a great start to another year. If you are a returning Parents Club member, thanks for your continued interest in this initiative. If you are new to the Club, it is great to have you and we hope you enjoy being involved in your local parent group! Most importantly, thank you *all* for your commitment to your children's education; your encouragement really will make a big difference in their lives.

In fact, study after study has shown that parental involvement is one of the primary factors in student achievement. In what ways will your support help your kids? Here are just a few of the ways.

- When families are involved in their children's education, students have higher self-esteem, more positive attitudes toward school, and better attendance rates. They also achieve higher grades and test scores, graduate at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education.
- Parental involvement leads students to complete higher quality and more age-appropriate homework, and challenges such as alcohol use, violence, and behaviour problems decrease as parental involvement increases.

In addition, your support is central to the creation of education systems that respect and teach First Nations languages and cultures. Giving children a solid foundation in their

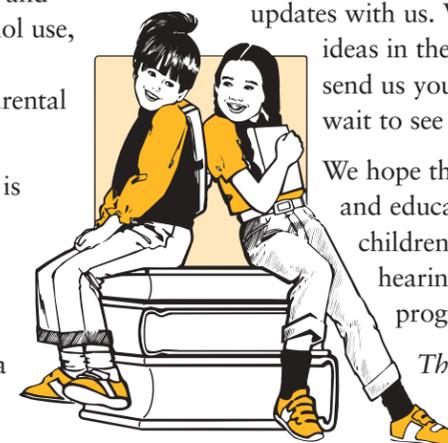
culture and helping them to develop a positive sense of identity helps them become higher achievers in all areas of education and life. To achieve that goal, family and community involvement in home and school learning is crucial!

Given all of those benefits, you should be very proud of your efforts to help out. Whether you are encouraging your children to be positive about school ... helping them get to school on time ... making sure they are well rested and well fed ... attending school events ... getting to know your children's teachers ... participating in school decision making ... whew!!! The list of what you can do is almost endless and each thing is equally important, so get involved in whatever way makes you feel comfortable.

And what will the Parents Club be doing to help? We will continue to provide a range of different materials in the months ahead, including regular newsletters, information updates, and a special 2006 calendar designed just for Club Members. We also have more great surprise gifts for any parents who share stories, poems, or updates with us. We love including your ideas in the newsletters, so please send us your information and then wait to see what arrives in the mail.

We hope the next few months are fun and educational for you and your children. We look forward to hearing from you as the year progresses.

The First Nations Schools Association



Need more information?

Is this the first time you've heard about the First Nations Parents Club? If you would like more information about the initiative, please contact our office at (604) 925-6087. The First Nations Parents Club is sponsored by the First Nations Schools Association to recognize the tremendous dedication of parents who support their children's learning. All Club materials and activities are available for free. To start a Club in your community, just contact us and request a Parents Club start-up package. We'd love to hear from you!



Do You Experience Bedtime Frustration?

With another school year underway, we thought this might be a good time to share some encouraging words about sleep. Of course we all know about the importance of sleep. It helps children grow, develop physically and mentally, and stay healthy. Unfortunately, many experts believe that an alarming number of young people – and adults, too – are not getting the sleep they need.

But while we may recognize the importance of sleep, setting a regular bedtime and actually getting children to sleep at that time can be challenging. If this is a struggle in your home, just remember ... the rewards will make your efforts worthwhile.

Here are a few tips we hope will help make bedtime easier for you and your family.

Start your preparations well before it is time to say goodnight.

- Many children will fall asleep more easily if you do calming, relaxing activities in the evening, such as reading quietly or talking about the day. That will help your kids settle down and unwind.
- Whatever you're doing in the evening, start reminding your children that bedtime is next. Try saying "let's start this book and we'll go to bed after 30 minutes of reading." Then halfway through say "look at that – only 15 minutes left before bed."
- Watching an exciting or scary television show is definitely something to avoid in the evening.
- Never give your children a bedtime snack with caffeine in it, such as cola or chocolate.



Have a regular bedtime routine.

- Children often go to bed more easily if they know what to expect each night.
- Some of the things you might include in a bedtime routine are taking a bath, brushing teeth, reading books or telling stories, singing quiet songs, or cuddling together in a comfortable chair.

Let your children know it is okay if they don't fall asleep right away.

- Tell your children that spending quiet time in bed is nice, but make sure they know that they are to *stay* in their bed after bedtime.
- Help your children think of good things to do while lying in bed, such as cuddling a stuffed animal, remembering a happy experience, singing to themselves, or thinking about something they are looking forward to.

Leave a light on.

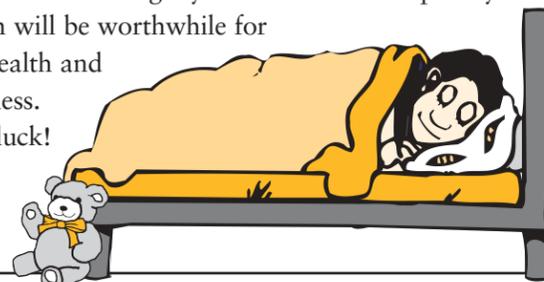
- Many children sleep better with a nightlight or the door kept slightly ajar.

Be patient and stick to the bedtime.

- If children are fussing, it can be tempting to give in and let them get out of bed. That won't help solve bedtime challenges in the long-term. Be understanding but firm.
- If your children are crying at bedtime, they might need a bit more comforting. If that happens, try spending a little more time with them in the bedroom. Sometimes a backrub can calm an upset child, or having you sit nearby for a few extra minutes might help them relax and fall asleep.

We know that setting good bedtime habits can be quite a struggle, but the effort you make to set a regular routine and get your children to sleep early enough will be worthwhile for their health and happiness.

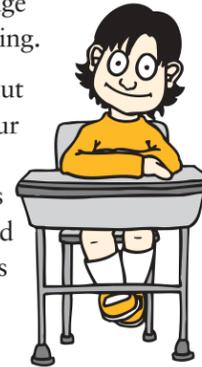
Good luck!



Making "Back-to-School" Easier

The fall can be a difficult time for some children. Making the transition from summertime fun and freedom to a structured school day and classroom can be a big adjustment. With that in mind, here are a few simple suggestions that you can use to help your kids get through the change they're experiencing.

- Be positive about school. Ask your children about the good things that happen and help them focus on what they like about



school. What are their favourite subjects? What do they like about their teachers? Who are their new friends?

- Share your belief that school is important and that your children need a good education. Make sure your children understand your expectations for their learning as early as possible, and show them that you value their education.
- Be understanding when your children tell you about their frustrations. All children will occasionally feel some stress about their homework, tests, grades, their friends, or even their

teachers. Just being there to

listen and offer support will help tremendously.

- Visit the school. See what happens during the day. Chat with administrators and teachers. That will show your kids that you care about their education and it will help you talk to them about their experiences.
- Praise your children's efforts and accomplishments as often as you can. Your positive reinforcement will make a *big* difference to your children's learning.



Getting the Information You Need About Special Education

Throughout the year ahead, many parents will have questions about the special education services available for their children. If you need any assistance, please feel free to call the First Nations Special Education Toll-Free Telephone Resource Line. Lisa Ellis is available by phone to provide information or ideas to help you. Some of the services Lisa can provide include the following.

- Helping parents to understand special education assessment results and prepare for the development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Talking about the types of services that may be available in schools for students with special needs, as well as ways that parents can support their children's learning at home.

- Providing information about other resources that may help, including books, videos, and support groups.

Please feel free to call the Special Education Toll-Free Telephone

Resource Line with any of your questions. The free phone/fax number is 1-877-547-1919, and the hours are Monday to Thursday 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. (24 hour voice mail).

Fruit-Topped Snack Cake

½ cup low-fat plain yogurt
 ½ teaspoon grated lemon or orange zest
 2½ cups blueberries, strawberries, thinly sliced peaches, plums, or any combination

1½ tablespoons vegetable oil
 1 cup self-rising flour*
 7 tablespoons sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray 8" by 8" baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In a small bowl combine yogurt, oil, and lemon zest. In a medium bowl combine flour, 5 tablespoons of the sugar, and salt.

Pour wet ingredients over dry. Stir gently with spatula until just combined. Spoon into the pan, top with fruit, and sprinkle with remaining sugar.

Bake about 30 minutes until bubbly. Cool in the pan and enjoy.

*Substitute for self-rising: 1 cup flour, 1½ teaspoons baking powder, ½ teaspoon salt