

Newsletter

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CROW Comments

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www.crowlanark.com

**Children's Resources on
Wheels (CROW)
programs include :**

**Ontario Early Years
Centre**

**Licensed Home Child
Care**

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

We Believe:
That programs and services for families should be open to everyone

April 22 is Earth Day.

Earth Day aims to inspire awareness of and appreciation for earth's environment. The April 22 Earth Day, founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson, was first organized in 1970 to promote ecology and respect for life on the planet as well as to encourage awareness of the growing problems of air, water and soil pollution.

Perth Playgroup changes

Starting Tuesday, April 7 the Perth Thursday playgroup will move from the library to Tay Care Senior Centre, 100 Wilson St. from 10 a.m. to noon. Remember playgroup will be Tuesday instead of Thursday.

The CROW office will be closed on Friday, April 3 for Good Friday and April 6 for Easter Monday.

CROW Annual General Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation is April 22 7 p.m. at our office in Smiths Falls. If you would like to attend please call us at 613-283-0095 ext 300.

In honour of National Volunteer week, we would like to recognize and say thank you to our volunteers who give their energy, skills, and time freely to Children's Resources on Wheels

If you would like to take back your parental authority in a way that lands you and your children on the same team, come and join us for our **FREE 2 session Good Discipline Good Kids Workshop** on April 1 and 8 at the CROW office in Smiths Falls. You must pre-register so we will have enough materials to hand out. To register please call us at 613-283-0095 ext 300.

Licensed Home Child Care is currently looking for child care providers throughout Lanark County. For more please visit our website at

www.crowlanark/childcare/provider-page/





A Child's Relationships



Licensed Home Child Care

When children relate to many different people, they learn important social skills.

A child needs relationships with many people: parents, sisters and brothers, extended family members, friends, neighbours, teachers, health care workers, caregivers, classmates. The relationships a child has with other people are resources that foster physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and social health. Children have a right to relationships. When children relate to many different people, they learn important social skills. For example, they learn how to make friends and how to get along with others. They learn they are special and worth knowing.

The opportunities a child has to build relationships depend largely on their family's lifestyle. Do they have a large extended family, with grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins? Do they go to childcare or to a play-group? Do they have opportunities to be with people in the community?

Communicate! Some tips for active listening

Clear communication and lots of it is the most useful tool to build a close relationship with a child. Adults must learn to be active listeners, paying close attention to a child's words, sounds, behaviour and body language. Here are some tips:

*use words like "I hear you telling me you are sad because.... Can you tell me

more?" This lets the child know you were really listening to him/her. It gives him/her an opportunity to correct you if you didn't quite understand. It encourages him/her to express his/her own point of view.

*Use I messages like "I see you are having fun but when you climb the fence, I'm afraid you are going to fall and get hurt." This way, you acknowledge the child's point of view, as well as voice your concerns about his/her behaviour and your feelings about him/her. Children need to know you still care about them, even when they are doing something you don't think is in their best interest.

*children who feel acceptance and trust are more likely to express themselves openly. They feel safe knowing you care about them, no matter what.

Mine!

Sharing is hard when children don't understand they are not losing something. Very young children tend to be concerned mostly with themselves until they have more experience learning social skills and building relationships. It is normal for a child of two to be more interested in "me" than in relationships with other children. A three-year-old who spends

time with others is more likely to practice skills you have tried to teach like sharing, cooperation, planning and working together.

What does play have to do with relationships?

When children role play and pretend, they learn about daily life and relationships. A child who plays with a doll may be pretending to care for a baby sister or brother. A child who stuffs a large purse with paper may be pretending to be Mom leaving for work with her briefcase. These children come closer to understanding what life is like and what possibilities it holds.

Children explore relationships through play. They find answers to puzzling questions and ease their fears. When a child is upset about something, he/she will often process the problem by acting it out or by pretending.

Children play roles that they know about: Mom, Dad, teacher, doctor, nurse, librarian, grandparents, brother, sister, caregiver, crossing guard. Adult clothes, hats, shoes, phones, child-sized furniture and kitchen appliances and other props encourage imaginary and pretend play.

—adapted from Canadian Child Care Federation Resource Sheet #51



Ontario Early Years Centre

Literacy Page

Learning About Letters

Sing the alphabet song.

It's never too early. This is how most children begin to learn about letters.

Why?

To learn to read and write, children must understand that words are made up of individual letters and that each letter has its own name and sound. Learning to tell one letter from another involves being able to see the differences in letter shapes. Help your child learn about the alphabet during play.

Starting at birth:

Point out shapes. Help your baby see and feel different shapes as you play together. "The ball is round."

Hang mobiles where your baby can see them.

Sing the alphabet song. It's never too early. This is how most children begin to learn about letters.

Additional Tips for Toddlers and Preschoolers:

Talk to your child about how things are the same or different. "both of these are cars but this one has a round shape and this one is

square."

Play with letters. Letting your child play with a variety of alphabet toys makes learning about letters fun (alphabet blocks, magnetic or foam letters, alphabet puzzles...).

Keep alphabet play fun. Try not to make it seem like work. Your child may not be paying attention to the letters, but he/she is still becoming familiar with them.

Read alphabet books. Talk about the letters as you point to them. "A is for apple. The word apple begins with the letter a. Let's listen to the sound - /a/apple. Hear the /a/sound?"

Talk about the letters. Point out letters that are most interesting to your child - usually the letters of his own name. "Ketchup starts with the letter 'k'. Kim starts with the letter 'k' too. Let's see if we can find another letter 'k'."

Additional Tips for Kindergarten Children:

Make an alphabet book together. For each letter of the alphabet, have him draw pictures or cut out pictures from a magazine, or use family photos. Be sure to print the word under each picture (A a - apple, ant, Andy...) For more suggestions on making books with your child, please visit the Emergent Literacy link at www.sudburybeststart.ca

Stay involved in your child's learning. Support what your child is learning in school. Talk to the teacher. Help your child complete take home activities.

Adapted from Building Language and Literacy at Home - a project of the Sudbury Community Emergency Literacy Committee Tip Sheet #6.





Parenting Page

Creativity & Imagination

"Preempt the time spent on television and organized activities and have them spend it instead on claiming their imaginations. For in the end, that is all we have. If a thing cannot be imagined first -- a cake, a relationship, a cure for AIDS -- it cannot be. Life is bound by what we can envision. -- Nancy H. Blakey

What a great quote! I think the most important skill we can help children develop is curiosity. From that comes creativity and imagination and the desire to learn! All else is then possible. Okay, I say that knowing full well what curiosity did to the poor cat and I will admit to squashing my children's curiosity when I found them catapulting our youngest up onto a horse! And again when our oldest experimented with matches.

So how do we encourage creativity/imagination and still have authority and rules?

Dr. Laura Markham of www.ahaparenting.com says that the same parenting that helps kids become emotionally healthy encourages creativity. That means offering choices and encouragement, freedom to experiment even if that means making mistakes (as long as they are still safe-no matches or horses involved!) and most of all, **time to play!** They should be

focusing on doing things, not just creating a product. Let them be themselves, different is okay!

Expect messes. Know it's coming and be prepared. Be realistic. You can't put out water to be played with and not expect wet floors and kids.

Materials/stuff needs to be accessible. Whether it's art, a couch fort or a dirt hill village, you need stuff to do it. When kids are bored, these materials need to be easily at hand. When kids are bored, offer these instead of technology. If they can access things on their own, they are likely to be more creative.

Accountability is a part of creativity. The first thing that comes to mind is clean up. It's all part of the process. This is also the place to chat about safety. Catapults are cool, but the toddler is not a projectile.

Not too many rules. In order to think for yourself, you need to be able to have the freedom to try different things. While safety is not negotiable, many other things are. At CROW's Sprinkler Party in August, one of the favourite activities is painting our vehicle. A bucket of water and a paintbrush is all it takes. What else can you paint? Cement has amazing

results! Mud, water, sticks and a pot – instant chemistry lab! And yes, we did a lot of laundry around here...

Even with freedom comes some structure. Bedtime, exercise, respect for each other and a healthy diet are still the norm. A healthy dose of creativity is often draining. It can be frustrating and exhausting at times. We still need to take care of our body, and through it all, lots of emotional support from Mom and Dad!

I'll leave you with a final word from Dr. Laura Markham:

A crucial tip: It helps enormously to prevent kids from depending on TV or computer to entertain them. Kids who regularly use the TV or computer are more likely to feel bored than other kids, and even after eliminating the habit it can take months for them to find other activities about which they are passionate.

By Jane Paul, Parent Education Coordinator

The most important skill we can help children develop is curiosity.





Parenting Page

Benefits of Play in Natural Settings

Parents used to say, “Go outside to play”, but nowadays children are more likely to hear, “Hurry up, we’ll be late for your lesson!?” At a younger and younger age, children are spending their time indoors, often in structured, supervised activities. Parents make this choice because they want to keep their children safe and busy with educational experiences. However, it also means children have little time left for free play outdoors. Even when outside, they tend to play on a sports field or in an asphalt-covered schoolyard, climbing on standardized equipment. This trend has led some authors to talk about a “nature deficit.”

Natural playthings

What are children missing by not playing in natural environments? For a start, manmade spaces, with their straight lines and regular angles, lack the variety and novelty of places like forests, fields, beaches, stream banks and gardens. Think of what a baby experiences, sitting in a stroller in the garden, watching the movement of leaves in the breeze. A wind-up mobile over a crib will draw attention too, but the unpredictability of the leaves and their shadows will hold interest longer. Building a shelter out of branches and pine boughs in a corner of the park pushes preschoolers to use their creativity and imagination more than simply playing house in a pre-built structure in the schoolyard. Of course we want children to be safe, but there is a balance to be found

between safety and allowing them the freedom to explore. Natural materials like twigs, stones, flower petals, shells and logs encourage children to solve problems at their level. Compare the challenge of building a tower or a wall with river stones to building with blocks that are standard shapes and sizes.

Effects on the brain

Natural environments have positive effects on the human brain, both emotionally and cognitively. Our intellectual capacities are expanded by living in contact with large numbers of other people in cities, but our body’s alarm systems are triggered by the sudden noises and constant stimulation. Time spent outdoors in nature tends to counteract these stressful effects; the colour green is particularly calming. Studies have shown that:

- having trees and greenery in the neighbourhood improves residents’ mood, as well as their ability to concentrate and be resilient.
- people tend to recover faster from surgery if they can see a natural setting out of their hospital window.
- children can focus on a task better after spending 20 minutes in a park compared to their results after a walk down urban streets.

Caring for the planet

If we want the next generation to become ecologically aware, we need to foster their feelings of connection with nature. There’s lots children can learn from

books and the internet about the life of insects, birds and flowers, but nothing beats direct experience of the real thing. All their senses are stimulated, for example, when they lie in the grass watching ants bustle to and fro taking food to their ant-hill, or when they crouch beside a tide pool to discover the abundance of life in the shallow sea water. It is experiences like these that sow the seeds of environmentally conscious actions.

Sense of wonder

Many scientists, when asked how they chose their career, talk about times they spent playing freely in natural surroundings when they were very young. They had opportunities to try things out at their own pace and discover the diversity and beauty of nature. Not everyone will become a scientist, but all children are curious about how the natural world functions. By making it possible for them to experience nature first hand, we can foster the sense of wonder which will prepare them, not just for school, but for becoming lifelong learners.

—adapted from
www.parentsmatter.ca

To learn more about research on children and nature, visit www.childrenandnature.org

What are children missing by not playing in natural environments?



Crafts

Submitted by Cindy Goodfellow

GRASS HEAD MONSTER

You will need: A nylon sock or a foot from tights or a stocking, grass seed, sawdust, elastic band, yogurt container, googly eyes, paper, buttons, ribbon etc to decorate.

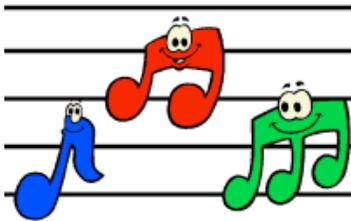
Instructions: Fill the toe of your sock with grass seed. Top up with sawdust until you have a ball shape. Fasten tightly with the elastic band. Decorate the yogurt container as the body using, paper, ribbon, and whatever else you can find in your craft box! Stand the stocking ball in the pot with the grass seed at the top. Add some eyes and any other decorative bits you like. Keep the yogurt container topped up with water. After a few weeks your head should grow hair!



Some springtime crafts and songs.

FILTER PAPER BUTTERFLY CRAFT

You will need: Coffee filter paper, Felt tip pens
Cut out a butterfly shape from the filter paper.
Colour in your butterfly with the felt tip pens.
Dip the butterfly lightly in water so all the colours run together. Leave to dry..



Nine Little Flowers

One little, two little, three little flowers,
Four little, five little, six little flowers,
Seven little, eight little, nine little flowers,
Peeping through the ground.

Give them rain and lots of sunshine,
Give them rain and lots of sunshine,
Give them rain and lots of sunshine,
So they'll grow up tall.

As they grow, they'll bud and bloom,
As they grow, they'll bud and bloom,
As they grow, they'll bud and bloom,
In the lovely springtime.



Ontario Early Years Centre

Playgroups

Please Note: No playgroups on Good Friday, April 3 and Easter Monday, April 6. There has been a change in day and location for the Perth playgroup at the library on Thursdays. The playgroup has been changed to Taycare Senior Centre, 100 Wilson St. on Tuesdays starting April 7.

Day	Location	Time	Staff	Dates
Monday	Almonte - Holy Name of Mary School	9:30 am - noon	Linda	April 13, 20, 27
Monday	Carleton Place - Carambeck Community Centre	10:00 - 11:30 am	Issie	April 13, 20, 27
Monday	Smith Falls - Duncan J. Schoular School	9:30 -11:30 am	Andrea	April 13, 20, 27
Monday	Perth - Dance Studio	9:30 -11:30 am	Cindy	April 13, 20, 27
Tuesday	Almonte - Naismith School	9:30 am - noon	Linda	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Almonte - Holy Name of Mary School evening	6:00 -7:30pm	Linda	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Carleton Place - Arena, 75 Neelin Street	10:00 - 11:30 am	Issie	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Montague - Montague Centennial Hall	9:30 - 11:30 am	Andrea	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Perth - Taycare Senior Centre, 100 Wilson St.	10:00 am - noon	Cindy	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Smith Falls - OEYC	9:00 -12:00 noon	Lori	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Tuesday	Smiths Falls - Trinity United Church	5:00 -7:00 pm	Lori	April 7, 14, 21, 28
Wednesday	Almonte - Holy Name of Mary School	9:30 am -2:00pm	Linda	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Wednesday	Carleton Place - Carambeck Community Centre	10:00 - 11:30 am	Issie	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Wednesday	Lanark - Maple Grove School	9:30 - 11:30 am	Andrea	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Wednesday	Perth - Perth & District Union Library	10:00 -11:30 am	Cindy	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Wednesday	Smiths Falls - Trinity United Church	9:00 - noon	Lori	April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Thursday	Almonte - Naismith School	9:30 am -2:00pm	Linda	April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Thursday	Carleton Place - Arena	10:00 - 11:30 am	Issie	April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Thursday	Lanark - Maple Grove School	9:30 -11:30 am	Andrea	April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Thursday	Perth - Perth & District Union Library	10:00-11:30 am	Cindy	April 2 only
Thursday	Smiths Falls - Trinity United Church	9:00 - noon	Lori	April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Friday	Smiths Falls - OEYC	9:00 - noon	Parent Run	April 10, 17, 24



Workshops

Workshop—Pre-registration is necessary— call OEYC ext 300	Date	Time	Location
Good Discipline Good Kids - 2 session workshop	Wednesdays, April 1 & 8	6:30 - 8:30 pm	CROW, Smiths Falls
How To Talk So Kids Will Listen - 3 session workshop	Tuesdays, April 14, 21, 28	6:30 - 8:30 pm	Stewart School, Perth
Family Science - 3 session workshop Dinner included	Tuesdays, May 5, 12, 19	Dinner 5:30 6:00 - 7:15 pm	Lanark, Sacred Heart School
Playdate with your Preschooler	Wednesday, May 6	10:00 - 11:00 am	Perth & Union District Library
Toddler Boogie	Thursday, May 7	1:30 - 2:30 pm	Lanark, Maple Grove School

Staff Directory

Ontario Early Years Centre	Ext	Licensed Home Child Care	Ext
Diane Bennett, Executive Assistant	313	Sherry Rodger, Accounting & Admin Support	301
Kathy Boelsma, Early Literacy Specialist	312	Janice LePage, Home Visitor	306
Emily Cassell, Data Analysis Coordinator	316	 <p>CROW Licensed Home Child Care A Program of Children's Resources on Wheels</p> <p>Do you need child care? Would you like to be a child care provider?</p> <p>Contact Us 613-283-0095 hcccrow@bellnet.ca</p>	
Sue Cavanagh, Executive Director	303		
Linda Cybulski, Playgroup Facilitator	304		
Jan Forsythe, Finance Manager	302		
Cindy Goodfellow, Playgroup Facilitator	307		
Linda Lalonde, Reception/Office Manager	300		
Issie Mullen, Playgroup Facilitator	311		
Jane Paul, Parent Education Coordinator	305		
Andrea Snyder, Playgroup Facilitator	318		
Janet Wheeler, Resource	311		
Lori Wintle, Playgroup Facilitator	310		