



I love this time of the year. I like driving at night and seeing decorative lights along the way, listening to people talk about what they do to celebrate and who they celebrate with and watching their faces as they put energy into thinking about others. And the music, I love the music! It all reminds me that this is a good world. There are good people and joyous things all around us. Sometimes that is a hard thing to remember... because this time of the year is hard too. Financial constraints, time constraints, family struggles and high expectations can make us feel overwhelmed. Okay let's try to put things into perspective...

First off, what's important to you? What do you and your family want to remember when this is all over? Make a (short) list of memorable things. It might be time spent with someone, a fun experience (card games, tobogganing, making cookies etc.), a family tradition (spiritual service, special food, decorating), exchanging presents (yes, I am a kid that never grew up), helping others and even rest and relaxation can be on the list.

Now go back and look at the list. It should be a short list, if not shorten it. Many of those things can also happen at other times. There is no time limit on experiences, shared time, traditions and helping others (just to mention a few). Pick a few you want to concentrate on and plan time for them. Leave lots of breathing room.

Secondly, what values do you want to be modeling to your children? Slowing things down, looking after yourselves and having unstructured time to play/rest is modeling important skills and values too. Look at some of the "shoulds" you feel and decide whether they belong in your world, are they just an old habit or if they are someone else's expectation that you don't need to take on.

Thirdly, breathe and smile. When changing patterns, sometimes we have to "fake it till we make it". Search for the simple, pleasurable moments... smiles, laughter, sunshine on the snow, the warmth inside you when you share... and enjoy them.

Doing these things increases our resilience, our ability to cope with life's bumps and curves. If you'd like to know more about it, check out our workshop "Bounce Back and Thrive" in the new year. Our new Parent Support Calendar will be out in January at www.crowlanark.com.

And last but not least, when choosing presents and sharing time with family, keep safety in mind. You can check out toy safety tips at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/toy-safety.html>. Please remind visitors to keep medications out of children's reach. Those pretty pills look like candy to our little ones. A trip to the emergency room is not one of the memories to be encouraged!

However you celebrate the season, notice the good and joyousness that is out there. People of all beliefs share in the kindness, caring and joy that is in our world. From our house to yours, wishing you joy, peace and love.



Jane Paul – Parent Education Coordinator, EarlyON Child and Family Centre

LOOKING FOR THE GOOD SIDE

Are you a pessimist or an optimist? When you pour 100mls of water into a glass that holds 200ml, is the glass half empty...or half full? When your four year old insists that the sauce on her plate can't touch the noodles, do you call her picky...or say that she really knows what she wants? The words you use to describe a child make a difference to how you feel about their behaviour. Your words influence how you treat them and how they feel about themselves.

If you tend to be a pessimist, replacing negative labels with positive descriptions can open up new possibilities for you and the children in your care.

New, positive words

Mary Sheedy Kurcinka is the author of *Raising Your Spirited Child* (2006). "Spirited" is the word she uses to describe what other people might call "difficult" children. She suggests finding positive words to describe traits that adults often complain about in children.

- Instead of "stubborn", try "willing to **persist in the face of obstacles**"
- Instead of "demanding", try "holding to **high standards**"
- Instead of "argumentative", try "strongly **committed to principles**"
- Instead of "anxious", try "**careful in new situation's**"
- Instead of "unpredictable, try "**flexible**" or "**a creative problem solver**"
- Instead of "bossy" try, "gifted with **leadership qualities**"

Positive expectations

Try out this kind of transformation next time you find yourself describing a child's behaviour in negative terms. Does it make you feel better about the situation? More positive language often leads to more positive feelings and an expectation that behaviour will improve. It's like that half full/half empty glass of water. The optimist is more likely to think that there is enough water to quench his thirst. The pessimist, on the other hand, worries that there will never be anything more to drink.



Changing old habits

To change your perspective, you need to apply this positive language in your private thoughts about children as well as in the way you talk about them to others. Changing the habit may be hard if you have been using negative labels for a long time, especially if those labels were used on you when you were a child! At first, you may have to pay particular attention to your words and make a conscious effort to turn them around. Like any change in habits, this will get easier after a while. You'll be helped by seeing how it pays off in improved relationships with your daycare children.

When a child hears you say these constructive new words, they, too, will adopt a sense of their potential strengths. How much better for their self-esteem to hear themselves described as observant of details instead of scatterbrained, as interested in learning instead of nosy or as good at foreseeing possible problems instead of a worrier.

Understanding is not excusing

Using more positive adjectives doesn't mean excusing unacceptable behaviour. Calling a child energetic instead of wild doesn't mean you have to let them treat your sofa like a trampoline. Instead, the new point of view can help you look for situations in which a child's strength will shine. Energy that is too exuberant in the living room may be just what is needed for success at gymnastics. A talent for expressing emotion could be channelled into drawing or playacting, rather than used for throwing tantrums on the kitchen floor. Once you have identified the good side of a characteristic, you can help a child learn the appropriate times, places and ways to express it.

Traits in adulthood

Often, the character traits that we complain about in children become qualities we admire in adults. Stubborn two year olds can be infuriating, but we want teenagers to be able to stick to their values and say no to drugs. We respect men and women who continue to work at achieving their goals in spite of setbacks. The challenge for parents and caregivers is to redirect that stubbornness in the toddler while still affirming the essential quality of persistence. That process begins with new words and a change of attitude.

Keep in mind the words of Isaac Bashevis Singer, American author and Nobel laureate for literature. He wrote, "When I was a little boy, they called me a liar, but now that I am grown up, they call me a writer."

Adapted from the Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs

Workshops

Workshop (Pre-Registration Necessary— Call 613-283-0095 x300)	Date	Time	Location
Tips for Twos (2 week session)	Tuesday, Dec. 4 & 11	6:30 pm –8:30 pm	Smiths Falls Early ON Child & Family Centre, 4 Ross St. (use Harold St. parking & entrance)



New workshop dates and locations will be announced in the January Newsletter. Stay tuned!

Staff Directory

Children's Resources on Wheels 613-283-0095	EXT	EMAIL
General/Reception	300	reception@crowlanark.com
Diane Bennett, Executive Assistant	313	dbennett@crowlanark.com
Joyce Buckley, Program Facilitator– Perth	307	jbuckley@crowlanark.com
Sue Cavanagh, Executive Director	303	scavanagh@crowlanark.com
Linda Cybulski, Program Facilitator – Almonte	314	lcybulski@crowlanark.com
Jen Lafleur Bell, Program Facilitator	316	jlafleurbell@crowlanark.com
Peggy Lavigueur, Bookkeeper	302	plavigueur@crowlanark.com
Janice Kelly, Home Visitor Licensed Home Child Care	306	janice@crowlanark.com
Issie Mullen, Program Facilitator – Carleton Place	315	imullen@crowlanark.com
Jane Paul, Parent Education Coordinator	305	jpaul@crowlanark.com
Andrea Snyder, Program Facilitator – Lanark, Montague	318	asnyder@crowlanark.com
Janet Wheeler, Resource	311	jwheeler@crowlanark.com
Lori Wintle, Program Facilitator – Smiths Falls	310	lwintle@crowlanark.com



Playgroups

Day	Location	Time	Staff	Dates
Monday	Almonte - Naismith School	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Linda	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Baby Talk Group at Almonte Library – Almonte	2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Linda	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Carleton Place - Arena	9:00 am -12:00 pm	Issie	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Carleton Place - Caldwell School	9:30 am -11:30 am	Andrea	Dec 3, 10, 17, 31
Monday	Perth - Perth Pool Annex	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Joyce	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Perth - Perth Pool Annex (Afternoon)	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Joyce	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Smiths Falls - EarlyON Child & Family Centre	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Lori	Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday	Baby Talk Group at EarlyON Child & Family Centre - Smiths Falls	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	Lori	Dec 3, 10, 17
Tuesday	Almonte - Naismith School	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Linda	Dec 4, 11, 18
Tuesday	Carleton Place -Caldwell School	9:30 am - 11:30 am	Issie	Dec 4, 11, 18
Tuesday	Montague - Montague Centennial Hall	9:00 am -12:00 pm	Andrea	Dec 4, 11, 18
Tuesday	Perth - Perth Pool Annex	9:00 am -12:00 pm	Joyce	Dec 4, 11, 18
Tuesday	Smiths Falls - EarlyON Child & Family Centre	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Lori	Dec 4, 11, 18
Wednesday	Almonte - R Tait MacKenzie School	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Linda	Dec 5, 12, 19
Wednesday	Carleton Place - Arena	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Issie	Dec 5, 12, 19
Wednesday	Baby Talk Group at Caldwell School - Carleton Place	12:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Issie	Dec 5, 12, 19
Wednesday	Lanark - Maple Grove School	9:30 am - 12:00 pm	Andrea	Dec 5, 12, 19
Wednesday	Perth - Perth & District Union Library	9:00 am -12:00 pm	Joyce	Dec 5, 12, 19
Wednesday	Smiths Falls - Lower Reach Park (Kinsmen Bldg.)	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Lori	Dec 5, 12, 19
Thursday	Almonte - R Tait MacKenzie School	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Linda	Dec 6, 13, 20
Thursday	Carleton Place - Caldwell School	9:30 am - 11:30 am	Issie	Dec 6, 13, 20
Thursday	Lanark - Maple Grove School	9:30 am -12:00 pm	Andrea	Dec 6, 13, 20
Thursday	Perth - Perth Pool Annex	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Joyce	Dec 6, 13, 20
Thursday	Baby Talk Group at Perth Pool Annex - Perth	1:00 pm - 2:30 pm	Joyce	Dec 6, 13, 20
Thursday	Smiths Falls - EarlyON Child & Family Centre	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Lori	Dec 6, 13, 20
Friday	Smiths Falls - EarlyON Child & Family Centre	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Jen	Dec 7, 14, 21

Saturday Events

Dec 1st, 10 am– 2 pm: It's a Chocolate Party in Carleton Place! Visit Issie from Carleton Place playgroup at Apple Cheeks Consignment Store for some chocolatey fun!

Dec 8th, 9 am–12 pm: Check this out! A playgroup and some Christmas baking fun at the Smiths Falls EarlyON Centre with Lori!

Dec 15th, 10 am–11 pm: Linda will be at the Almonte Library making “Merry Music”. Come join in on the fun!

