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We offer:

- Programs for parents and children together
- Parenting programs and support
- Community drop-in room
- Quality childcare



Play-by-Play: Growing Early Language Development

May 2017

When we think of “the play-by-play” given by sportscasters throughout a game of hockey, they continually talk, describing for us what is happening on the ice. Just as we are kept informed with all these colorful descriptions, our children benefit from *our* description of what is going on during daily activities like bath time, going for a walk, or getting groceries.

Try these suggestions:

- Get on your child’s level as much as possible. Face-to-face play and conversation is much more enjoyable for a child.
- Describe for your child what she is seeing, hearing, doing or feeling. “I hear the birds singing in the trees? Listen!” “What color apples should we get? Red or yellow?” “You’re washing your feet!”
- Use your face, your voice and your touch to communicate with your child. Body language can convey as much excitement and interest as your words. As your child learns to speak, you can interpret what he is saying. “Ju, Daddy, ju!” - “You want **juice**, Johnny? OK, here’s a cup of **juice**.”
- Focus on the key word. Children who hear lots of language every day tend to develop their speaking abilities at an earlier age. They are developing a strong foundation for *literacy* (reading, writing and understanding) and for problem-solving, two important skills for the school-age years. Parents who practice **play-by-play** on a daily basis will soon hear their children describing for them what is going on.

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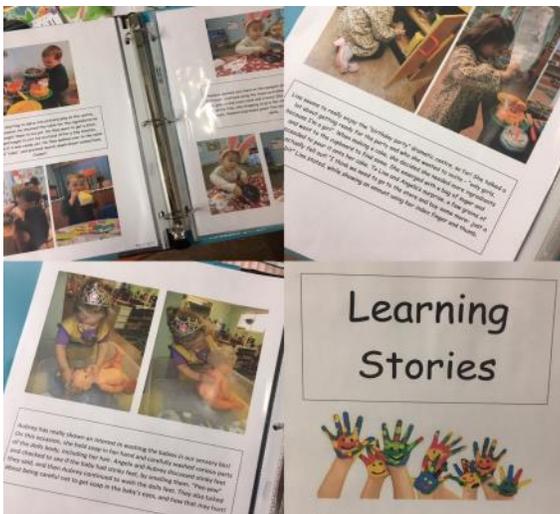
Centre Hours:
Monday to Friday
9am-4pm
Closed:
12 pm-1 pm daily
& Thursday
afternoons

- Adapted from “Growing Great Kids”, Great Kids Inc.

Learning Stories - by Angela

The child development staff have recently begun writing "learning stories" to capture children's experiences during their time in the Child Development room! Learning stories allow parents and caregivers to not only see photos of what their children are working on while in the playroom, but also allows them to read some of the dialogue that took place throughout their children's play. We may highlight a child learning a new skill, taking an interest in a particular activity, or engaging in pretend play with friends, among other experiences.

We will keep the stories in a binder on the sign-in table. Please take a peek next time you're in!



"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

- Fred Rogers

Rainbow spaghetti sensory play

Last month we held our 'Get Messy with Baby' workshop, which is always a favourite for parents and babies! The rainbow spaghetti is always popular and easy to do at home. Next time you make spaghetti for supper, put a little aside for some messy play. Divide the noodles into baggies (one baggie per desired color) and add several drops of food coloring to each baggie and shake to fully coat it. Rinse coloured spaghetti under cool water until water runs clear. Allow to dry for ten to fifteen minutes, place the noodles in a sensory bin or container, and begin your messy play! To take the play further, let your children use playdough scissors and cut the spaghetti.



What's been happening at the Centre?



Get ready for outside play!

The playground will be opening up now that the spring weather has arrived! Please remember that during playgroups or other workshops, children may head outside to play. Don't forget to dress for the weather and pack a hat, sunscreen and outdoor footwear!



Family Meals at the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre



Join us **Mondays from 5:30-6:30** for a family/children's supper. If you have children who are school-aged or younger, this is a great time to enjoy a night out with the kids and not have to cook. Be sure to check the Centre's Facebook page as the meal being served will be posted there!

Dartmouth Family Centre Outreach Support

Stairs Memorial Food Bank (44 Hester Street) Staff members from the Centre are available to share resource information and provide childcare on Wednesday mornings starting at 8:30am.

Clinics available at the DFC

Joan-Registered Nurse - Tuesday, May 9th & 23rd

Come see Joan for Pap tests, breast exams, family planning, STI screening, bone health, general health counseling

Jessica-Social Worker - Friday, May 12 & 26th

Come talk to Jessica to get support with stressful life events & accessing support in the community

Well Baby Clinic - Wednesday, May 10th & 24th

The public health nurse is available during baby & me to answer questions you may have about your baby's growth and development, feeding, weight gain or post partum concerns.



Dal Legal Aid - Wednesday, May 17th

A community legal worker is available to discuss issues around tenancy, income assistance or family law.