

# VILLAGE VOICES

*It takes a village to raise a child*

Healthy Child Coalition – Central Region

March-April 2015

## Genesis House

Genesis House, the Shelter for Women and Children in Crisis in Winkler, has been including parent-child activities as part of its programming for more than 20 years.

“We started our children’s program in 1993 and parent child programming informally at that time, but with recognized programs in 2002, approximately. Way back in time, 1995, I think the first program we did was the ‘how to talk so kids will listen’ program, says executive director Ang Braun.

Ang says that Genesis House recognized the need to put in place some early intervention before things got into crisis mode.

“We are also in a really unique position as a residential program to be able to provide mentioning in short term frames with families that may not be able to commit to a six week program. The value of having most staff cross trained provides clients with an opportunity that may otherwise not be available to them.”

Nowadays, approximately sixty families access these programs in any given year.

Currently Genesis House is offering the Triple P program in partnership with Winkler Family Resource Centre. Almost all of the staff have Kit & Kaboodle training to use with residential clients. Facilitators are also available for Mother Goose, Alphabet Soup and Developing Capable People.

“We have facilitated the PJ parties at Morden and Winkler libraries the past few years during our awareness month, really with the intent of assisting in developing healthy bedtime routines. Plus, we think it is super fun!” Ang says. The children’s counsellor is responsible for most of these programs, although all staff do some role modeling with residential clients.

Funding for parent-child programs comes from Healthy Child Coalition – Central Region, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Province of Manitoba, as well as any other grants that become available.

As a regional service, Genesis House is open to working collaboratively within the region. For many years, for example, it has offered parenting programs in partnership with Swan Lake First Nation. Because of budget constraints, however, most of the programming is done in the Morden-Winkler area.

Future plans include continued partnerships with other agencies to provide parent-child programming in regional communities.

Healthy Child Coalition  
Central Region



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**Next issue will be out**

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## Rabbit Doesn't Have a Tail at All

Sung to: "London Bridge"

Rabbit doesn't have a tail at all,  
Tail at all, tail at all.  
Rabbit doesn't have a tail at all,  
Just a power puff.

His ears are longer than his tail,  
Than his tail, than his tail.  
His ears are longer than his tail,  
It's a powder puff.

## The Caterpillar

The fuzzy little caterpillar went  
up into a tree

(Act like you are climbing)  
spun his cocoon and then  
(yawn) went to sleep (spin  
hands).

While he was sleeping  
He dreamt that he could fly  
(making flying motion)  
When he woke up  
(loud, excited) he was a  
butterfly!

## Easter Bunny, Easter Bunny *finger play*

Easter Bunny, Easter Bunny,  
*Put hands on top of head like rabbit  
ears.*

Small and white,  
*Hold hands close together to show  
something tiny.*

Come and fill my Easter basket  
*Pretend to fill basket.*

Overnight.  
*Pretend to sleep.*



## Rainbow Celery

### You need:

- At least one long stalk of celery with the leaves still on it.
- Food colouring
- Tall glass or jar

### What to do:

Cut a stalk of celery that still has leaves on it and stand it up in a glass of water deeply tinted with food colouring.

In less than an hour, the colour will begin to show up on the leaves. The results are quite dramatic.

The longer you leave the celery in the water, the more colorful it will become.

Try blue celery, red celery or even multi-coloured celery by slicing the stem stock partway up and putting the two halves into separate glasses of coloured water.

## Kitchen Fireworks

### • You need:

- Whole milk
- Baking pan
- Food colouring
- Dish soap

- Pour one cup of milk into the pan.
- Squirt a different colour of food colouring into each corner of the pan.
- Talk about the colours. Ask, what do you think will happen if we squirt some dish soap into the pan?
- Once you squirt the soap into the colours, you will see them burst and swirl. Remember, these fireworks are for watching, not for eating. The dishwashing liquid separates the fat in the milk from the rest of it and causes it to move. If it slows down, just add another squirt of dishwashing liquid.

# Habitat craft

## Materials required:

Shoe box with lid  
Blue paint (or other colours if you prefer)  
Scissors  
Glue  
Cellophane, cling wrap or wax paper  
Sand (you can substitute dirt from your yard, or gravel)  
Pine cones or small toy trees (small enough to fit inside the closed shoe box)  
Bits of dried plant material (dried moss, dried flowers, dried leaves, etc) or bits of ripped up green and brown tissue paper or crepe paper  
Rocks or pebbles  
Small toy animals that you would find in a forest or cut out animal pictures from a magazine. (Glue a toothpick or popsicle stick to the back of the picture to make it stand up in the shoe box).



## Instructions:

With an adult's help, cut a peep hole no bigger than a loonie in one of the short sides of the shoe box, using a pair of scissors.

Paint the inside of the shoe box blue, including the inside of the shoe box lid. Other paint colours can be used if you prefer, or skip this step entirely. Crayons or markers could also be used.



With some help from an adult, cut a square out of the lid. Glue or tape cellophane, cling wrap or wax paper onto the hole you just made. This hole is your 'sky'.

Cover the bottom of the box with sand, dirt or dried mosses. Place larger rocks or pebbles into the sand, as well as pinecones or toy trees. Add other plant and animal life. Items may be glued in place or attached with plasticine.

Put the lid on the box and look through the peep hole.

## Other Ideas:

Paint inside of the box blue. Cover the bottom of the box with cotton balls so it looks like clouds. Attach paper birds to pieces of thread and hang from the shoe box lid.

Paint the inside of the box sea blue or sea green. Put sand and rocks in the bottom. Put sea shells on the bottom. Attach paper fish to pieces of thread and hang them from the shoe box so it looks as if they are swimming.

Use cotton balls to line the bottom of the box to look like snow. Cut out pictures from old Christmas cards to make a winter or Christmas design; glue in place.

This shoe box idea has been around for more than 50 years! Some ideas never grow old.

# Attachment-promoting strategies for parents

(taken from the presentation "Building Brains by Making Connections", presented by Claire Watson, MSc and Emis Akbari, PhD at the FRP Canada conference March 12, 2015)

The brain grows at an astonishing rate from gestation to three years of age, with about 1,000 trillion new connections during this time. An overproduction of these connections results in a selective reduction (pruning).

The parent-child interaction is amongst the strongest predictors of child outcome. Early adversity or inadequate parenting can lead to limited exposure to language, touch and social interaction, all factors that have been shown to negatively affect brain development and child outcome.

Improved parent-child interaction and relationships have been shown to have positive effects on child development outcomes.

## **Create a loving connection:**

When parents respond sensitively and warmly to their child most of the time...

The child feels loved and connected with a strong emotional bond, and...

That child's brain develops millions of healthy connections among nerve cells.

## **Be a Secure Base:**

When parents watch over their child while they explore and welcome them back when they need protection...

The child feels curious, confident to explore and seeks comfort and help when needed, and ...

That child's upper brain (cortex) can devote more attention to learning.

## **Accept Feelings:**

When parents allow their child to express all kinds of feelings, happy and angry, by mirroring and naming them...

The child develops a true sense of who they are and is able to express feelings appropriately, and ...

Incorporates both the right and the left hemisphere.

## **Set Limits with Love:**

When parents provide calm re-direction towards acceptable behaviours by explaining, not blaming...

Their child feels more secure and begins to internalize their own self-control, and,

That child's upper brain develops impulse control and planning.

## **Have "Baby Conversations"**

When parents respond to their child's interests and feels, with words and gestures, and give their child lots of opportunities to take part in "conversations" right from birth ...

The child develops a strong desire to communicate and a solid foundation for language long before entering school, and ...

The child's non-verbal right brain and verbal left brain develop millions of healthy connections and the child's ability to process language has been shown to improve.

## THOUGHT FOR THE SEASON



"April hath put a spirit of youth in everything."  
- William Shakespeare

