



Family and Children's Services

Children's Developmental Services

All our newsletters are available for viewing on our website in full colour!
Visit www.facsrr.ca and click on developmental newsletter



It is never too early to consider children's mental health. Parents play a crucial role in guiding the development of their child's self-confidence and emotional strength and balance. But, as they say, children don't come with a manual. And parents can't always recall how they felt and thought when they were children.

BEING PREPARED

Know When to Seek Help for Your Child

Parents are usually the first to recognize that their child has a problem with emotions or behavior. Still, the decision to seek professional help can be difficult and painful for a parent. The first step is to gently try to talk to the child. An honest open talk about feelings can often help. Parents may choose to consult with the child's physicians, teachers, members of the clergy, or other adults who know the child well. These steps may resolve the problems for the child and family. Following are a few signs which may indicate that child and adolescent psychological services may be useful.

YOUNGER CHILDREN

- Marked fall in school performance.
- Poor grades in school despite trying very hard.
- A lot of worry or anxiety, as shown by regular refusal to go to school, go to sleep or take part in activities that are normal for the child's age.
- Hyperactivity; fidgeting; constant movement beyond regular playing.
- Persistent nightmares.
- Persistent disobedience or aggression (longer than 6 months) and opposition to authority figures.
- Frequent, unexplainable temper tantrums.

PRE-ADOLESCENTS AND ADOLESCENTS

- Marked change in school performance.
- Inability to cope with problems and daily activities.
- Marked changes in sleeping and/or eating habits.
- Many physical complaints.
- Sexual acting out.

Know When to Seek Help for Your Child

- Depression shown by sustained, prolonged negative mood and attitude, often accompanied by poor appetite, difficulty sleeping or thoughts of death.
- Abuse of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Intense fear of becoming obese with no relationship to actual body weight, purging food or restricting eating.
- Persistent nightmares.
- Threats of self-harm or harm to others.
- Self-injury or self destructive behavior.
- Frequent outbursts of anger, aggression.
- Threats to run away.
- Aggressive or non-aggressive consistent violation of rights of others; opposition to authority, truancy, thefts, or vandalism.
- Strange thoughts and feelings; and unusual behaviors.

If problems persist over an extended period of time and especially if others involved in the child's life are concerned, consultation with child and adolescent psychological services or a clinician specifically trained to work with children may be helpful.

Facts for Families is developed and distributed by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP).

Help for Learning Disabilities - Tipping the scales toward success

Primary learning style: For years educators have been aware of the advantages of introducing children to enriched learning environments that reinforce a child's primary learning style whether they are a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner.

- A visual learner often thinks in pictures and can more easily comprehend a lesson if provided with visual aides. They understand the teacher's intended communications by paying close attention to the teacher's facial expressions, eye contact, hand gestures and body language. For example, if a visual learner is only presented with verbal information they will absorb and retain less information than if the verbal instructions were combined with visual materials.
- An auditory learner interprets the underlying meaning of speech through tone, pitch and voice speed.
- Kinesthetic learners absorb information more easily by physically interacting with their environment through movement, drawing or taking notes.

Knowing what your child's primary learning style is and using it to maximize their ability to understand information, can help your child reach their optimal potential.

DETERIMING YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY LEARNING STYLE

VISUAL	AUDITORY	KINESTHETIC
learners see the world in mages or pictures	learners are good listeners	learners process information through their bodies and touch
Excels in the traditional classroom because most material is presented and tested visually	Do well in lecture based learning environments and are active in classroom discussions	Have trouble sitting still in class. They must touch, explore and create in order to learn. They are unable to process or retain material just by seeing or listening
They need to see to learn	Distracted by noise, conversation or music	Memory is linked to movement
They love to draw, write and are good organizers	Enjoy reading, looking at pictures, watching people and thrive with interaction and verbal repetition	Thrive in sports, drama, dance
Tools: books, videos, computers, posters	Tools: talk, discussion, debate	Tools: skits, note taking, art

Sensory Solutions

Fun for the Under 3 Set

Submitted by Brenda Witherspoon-Bedard

Here is some fun playtime ideas designed for your favorite young people.

Birth to 12 Months:

Please Touch. Cut 3x3 inch squares of fabrics (ex. lace, denim or felt) and papers (ex. foil, sandpaper or construction paper) with different colors and textures. Glue each square onto a sturdy piece of paper or poster-board. Let your baby touch each card and explore the texture with his hands. Does he want to hold the cards himself? Reaching and grasping behaviors show you that your baby can now use his body purposefully to act on his desires.

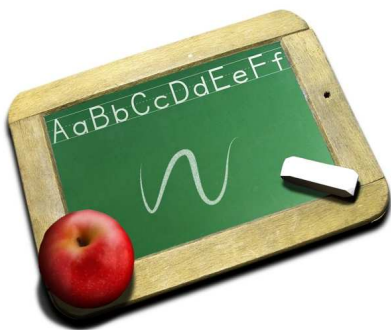


12 to 24 Months:

Cruising Curiosity. Place a collection of fun and interesting objects (feathers, spoons, whisk, balls, etc.) on top of a low table that is safe for your child to stand at and cruise around. Encourage her to pull up on the table and check out the toys. Spot her carefully as she makes her way around the table to explore each of the objects you've placed there. Activities like this promote muscle strength and dynamic balance.

24 to 36 Months:

Lighty Light. Find a flashlight with an easy on/off button for "light play" with your toddler. Dim the room lights and shine a beam on the walls and ceiling, on your child's arms and legs, on your face. Then let him make the light "dance." After a while, he will be delighted to figure out that he is controlling where the light goes!



Best Autism Websites for Teachers

I wanted to share a great new resource, a listing of Autism websites for teachers, homeschoolers, and service providers. Many of the websites have free printables such as data sheets, lesson plans, file folder games, TEACCH-based tasks, and transition resources. If you're a parent, be sure to forward it to your child's teachers and IEP team!

http://www.iKeepBookmarks.com/Best_Autism_Sites_for_Teachers

Butterfly Thoughts



The Special Mother by Erma Bombeck

Most women become mothers by accident, some by choice, a few by social pressure and a couple by habit. This year nearly 100,000 women will become mothers of handicapped children. Did you ever wonder how mothers of handicapped children are chosen?

Somehow I visualize God hovering over earth selecting his instruments for propagation with great care and deliberation. As He observes, He instructs His angels to make notes in a giant ledger.

"Forrest, Marjorie; daughter. Patron saint, Cecelia."
"Rutledge, Carrie; twins. Patron saint, Matthew."
Finally He passes a name to an angel and smiles,
"Give her a handicapped child."
The angel is curious. "Why this one God?
She's so happy."

"Exactly," smiles God, "Could I give a handicapped child to a mother who does not know laughter?
That would be cruel."

"But she has patience?" asked the angel.
"I don't want her to have to much patience or she will drown in a sea of self-pity and despair. Once the shock and resentment wears off, she'll handle it."

"I watched her today. She has that feeling of self & independence that is so rare and so necessary in a mother. You see, the child I'm going to give her has his own world. She has to make her live in her world and that's not going to be easy."

"But, Lord, I don't think she even believes in you."
"God smiles, "No matter, I can fix that. This one is perfect - she has just enough selfishness."

The angel gasps - "selfishness? is that a virtue?"
God nods. "If she can't separate herself from the child occasionally, she'll never survive. Yes, here is a woman whom I will bless with a child less perfect. She doesn't realize it yet, but she is to be envied. She will never take for granted a 'spoken word'". She will never consider a 'step' ordinary. When her child says 'Momma' for the first time, she will be present at a miracle, and will know it!"

"I will permit her to see clearly the things I see...ignorance, cruelty, prejudice....and allow her to rise above them. She will never be alone. I will be at her side every minute of every day of her life, because she is doing My work as surely as if she is here by My side".

And what about her Patron saint? asked the angel, his pen poised in mid-air.

God smiles, "A mirror will suffice."

Are you aware that Family and Children's services offer a variety of voluntary services within the Rainy River District? These services include:

Children's Mental Health Services – Assisting children, adolescence and their families who may be experiencing emotional, social, and/or psychological problems in their school, family, and/or community life. Services are provided free of charge, for a wide range of difficulties from mild adjustment reactions to severe psychiatric problems in children ranging in age from birth up to 18 years.

Infant & Child Development – Servicing children 0 – 6 years of age who are at risk for a delay, or children with a diagnosed physical, developmental or sensory disability. Some of the services provided include early intervention programs, developmental screening and assessments, assistance with transition to school for special needs children, and parenting programs on a group or individual basis.

Community Integration – servicing children with a developmental disability 6 years – 18 years. The primary focus of this program is to facilitate integration into the community. Some of the services provided include developmental assessments, advocacy in relation to other agencies, linkages to health, financial, and educational resources in the community.

Family Relief – a program that provides families a respite period from the responsibility of the daily care of an individual with a developmental disability. The three options to services include In-home respite – provided in the family home, Out-of-home respite – provided in the approved worker's home, and community participation – The individual is accompanied by their Family Relief Worker into the community to participate in community events or activities.

For more information about the above voluntary services please contact Family and Children's Services
For Fort Frances call (807) 274-7787 or 1-800-465-7764 (Toll Free), for Atikokan call (807) 597-2700, and for Rainy River call (807) 483-1357.

To make a referral for service, please call Integrated Services Northwest, The Integrated Services for Northern Children Program for Single Point of access. For Fort Frances, Rainy River and area call 274-7787, for Atikokan area call 807-597-4528

Do you have something to Share?
Please phone Debra Bruyere at 274-7787 ext. 229 or email dbruyere@facsrr.ca

