



Children's Mental Health

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1-800-465-7764

Finally, Warm Weather



In all my years in the field of mental health, one of the constants that I have always been told is that our **physical health and mental health** are very **strongly connected**. Almost every intervention or textbook emphasized the importance of physical exercise as an important intervention for a wide variety of common mental health diagnoses. From **Depression** to **Anxiety** or from **Bipolar Disorder** to

Attention Deficit

Hyperactivity Disorder experts agree that physical exercise and movement is a very important coping skill. However, for many, the cold winters of the Northwest have caused a lack of opportunity for such physical activity. Because of this, it seems to me that our cold climate is every bit a challenge to our physical health as it is to our mental health.

Now that we are finally seeing friendly outside weather, my encouragement to you is to take advantage - **get active and get outside!** This summer could be your opportunity to kick off a healthy pattern of regular exercise that could increase your quality of life all year round.

Additionally, I've noticed that our district has some great



opportunities for indoor activities to carry you through the winter months as well. Always keep in mind the very strong bond that exists between our physical and mental health. I hope you have a healthy and physically active summer.

Troy Clink
Manager of Children's
Mental Health Services



Community Service & Quality Assurance

Supervised Access Program



Research and professional experience tells us that **children of divorce** are affected and emotionally impacted the

most when **caught in the middle of the conflict** that may exist between their parents.

For families that are experiencing a separation and/or divorce, exchanges can often be a time when this conflict is witnessed by children. **The Supervised Access Program** was created to **provide a safe, neutral, child-focused place** where exchanges and visits can occur.

The philosophy of the Supervised Access Program is that **children have the right to a safe and healthy relationship with both parents**, and that children benefit greatly from the

positive involvement of both of their parents. The Supervised Access Program provides an **opportunity for children to visit** with their **non-custodial parent** in a supervised setting, ensuring their safety and preventing the loss of this important relationship.

Exchanges can also be facilitated; parents are given **staggered drop off and pick up times**, eliminating the contact between them, thus reducing the risk that children will witness conflict.

May Is Safe Child Access Month

The Supervised Access Program will be recognizing Safe Child Access Month in May through an **orange ribbon campaign**. Orange is a **colour of warning**. It tells people to **watch out and take notice**. It is the hope of the program that through this campaign, the community will take notice of



the many children and families that would benefit from these services, and that families will recognize the program as a **tool** that can help them through a difficult **transitional time**.

In the Rainy River District there are three Supervised Access locations: **Fort Frances, Atikokan and Emo**.

For further information regarding Supervised Access Programs, please contact Sarah Pyzer, Supervised Access Program Coordinator at (807) 274-0381 or Toll Free at 1-800-465-7764.



If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically; or to provide feedback about the newsletter, please notify us by sending an e-mail to: Information@facrr.ca

We are on the Web!
www.facsrr.ca

Developmental Services

New Items for the Multi-Sensory Rooms

The Developmental Services team is excited to announce many new items have been purchased for the **multi-sensory rooms in both Atikokan and Fort Frances.** As each of the multi-sensory rooms have their own personality and needs, the user may not find exactly the same items in each location. Also, we do not have all the items in the rooms at once as we like to change things around once in a while.

One of the new items purchased for both rooms is a



bubble mirror. This exciting piece of equipment reflects multiple images from nine different "bubble" mirrors. Watch the reflections change shape and size as the user moves.

Other **new additions** include flex rings, a tactile panel,

various types of sensory balls and a bean bag blanket made of frogs. This one you have got to see and experience!

Come and try out some of our new equipment. If you would like further information or would like to receive **training** in the multi-sensory room, please contact a Developmental Services team member who would be pleased to assist you. Remember to use the multi-sensory room in your **summer programming** this year.

Brenda Witherspoon
Child Development Worker



Child Protection Services

Spanking Your Child—When Will Child Protection Get Involved?

Physical discipline. Corporal punishment. Spanking or smacking. Sometimes Child Protection workers are asked **what is acceptable or legal** in Canada. Though 23 countries have abolished corporal punishment of children, in Canada parents are permitted to use physical force, as **per section 43 of the Criminal Code**, which states that the force is only justified *by way of correction* and *if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances*.

The words "by way of correction" mean that the use of force must be **sober and reasoned**, address actual behaviour, and be intended to **restrain, control, or express symbolic disapproval**. The child must have the **capacity to understand** and benefit

from the correction, so the force is **not justified** against children **under 2** or those with **particular disabilities**.

The words "reasonable under the circumstances" mean that the force must be transitory and trifling, must **not harm or degrade** the child, and must not be based on the gravity of the wrongdoing. Parents **may not strike children over 12**, may not hit them with an object, and may not strike a child to the head or face. Typically, a legally acceptable force would be a restrained smack with an open hand on the rear.

Physical force however, **is never recommended** as a disciplinary technique because corporal punishment: is very limited in its capacity to deter the unwanted behaviour; does not teach alternative desirable behaviour; often promotes

defiance, aggressive or antisocial behaviour, and attachment to "delinquent" peer groups; teaches children that aggression and violence are acceptable responses to conflicts and problems; may lower self-esteem in children; is associated with other negative outcomes for children such as anxiety, depression, alcoholism, and/or drug addiction in adulthood.

When we, as Child Protection workers, are involved with families that may use excessive physical discipline, we can teach parents effective techniques to manage their children's behaviour. Workers received **Triple P** (Positive Parenting Program) training last month, enabling workers to provide more meaningful guidance to parents, in a structured format.

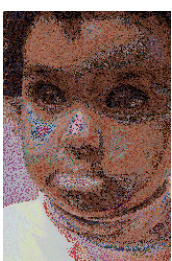
Milica Thacher,
Family Service Worker

Call your local office of Family & Children's Services 24 Hours a day, 7 Days a week Or visit us on the web www.facsrr.ca



Children's Services

Information Evening



Foster Care Coordinator, Christa Little and **Adoption Services Worker,** Martene Nelson are planning an **Information Evening** for the

community in the month of **June**. Because the region is always in need of foster and

adoptive parents, this session will **provide information on the process of becoming a temporary or permanent family for a child**. Family and Children's Services of the District of Rainy River is proud to have Christa and Martene trained in SAFE (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) as this home study format is now a Ministry requirement for all agencies across Ontario. **Information**

will be given **on Child Protection Services and Children's Services** and how the two come together to assist in all aspects of a child's life.

This evening is open to all community members who are interested in making a difference in the life of a child. Please call Martene at 274-7787 ext. 267 or Christa at ext. 226 for a date and time.