



BC Aboriginal  
Child Care Society

# Caring for our Children newsletter

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## CONTENTS

### FEATURE ARTICLES

2011 BC Aboriginal Child Care  
Recognition Awards  
Pages 1-2

Strategies for Spirituality Safety  
in Aboriginal Early Childhood  
Development  
Page 2

Creating a Vision for Staff  
Interactions  
Page 3

Kids Have Stress Too!  
Page 4

Hay Chxwq'a! Kukstemc!  
Meegwetch!  
Page 5

Dental Hygiene for  
Our Little Ones  
Page 6

Elder Rose Point- 2011 Perry  
Shawana Award Recipient  
Page 7

2011 Mary Thomas Memorial  
ECE Scholarships  
Page 8



## 2011 BC Aboriginal Child Care Recognition Awards



*Award Recipients Karen Hazelman (left) & Pamela Lee Lewis (right) with BC ACCS President Mary Teegee*

### Individual Award Recipients: Pamela Lee Lewis and Karen Hazelman

**Pamela Lee Lewis** is the Director of Education for the We Wai Kai Nation where her position entails all levels of education from pre-school to post-secondary. She has been working within the department in various capacities since 1998. Pamela maintains a child-at-centre approach to all of her work. She excels at grass-roots work within her community as well as political advocacy for early childhood development at the provincial government level.

**Karen Hazelman** is an Early Childhood Educator at The Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society's Sundance Daycare where she has worked since 1981. She is Coast Salish and was raised by her great grandparents on her mother's side. She has been in the early childhood development field for over 30 years. She enjoys sharing her expertise to help other Aboriginal Daycares start up such as the Children's House in Musqueam and Kispiox Daycare in Northern BC.



## 2011 BC Aboriginal Child Care Recognition Awards

### Group Award Recipient: The Teachers of Pqusnalhcw & Ullus Child Care Centres, Mt. Currie

The Teachers of Pqusnalhcw & Ullus Child Care Centres, Mt. Currie are integral to the promotion of health and well-being of children and their families in their community. They work hard to nurture and support a healthy environment for children to play, learn and grow. The teachers are qualified in Early Childhood Education, Infant/Toddler and Special Needs. In addition, they have sought out an array of other training such as the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum model, Partnership in Communication Program, Challenging Behaviours, FNES Emergency Services, etc... The classroom is rich in local culture, traditions, foods, music and Ucwalmicts language.



*The Teachers of Pqusnalhcw & Ullus Child Care Centres, Mt. Currie*

## Strategies for Spirituality Safety in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development

By Cindy Jamieson

I conducted a workshop at the 2011 BCACCS Conference on “Strategies for Spirituality Safety in Aboriginal Early Childhood Development”. Together, participants and I experienced a variety of exercises and large/small group discussions to explore defining spiritual safety, barriers to spirituality in our practice, and creating a safe space for spirituality in our organizations and programs.

The workshop participants seemed very engaged and enthusiastic about the topic. Although there appeared to be some initial comfort issues, they all risked and participated in every exercise and discussion presented, openly and with great honesty. They were also very helpful in assisting me with adding some information and refining the presentation. By the close of the workshop they had each developed strategies for enhancing spirituality in their work and their lives.

The following are key points about spirituality safety raised at the workshop:

- Expressing spirituality is an important aspect of holistic health (as per the medicine wheel);

- Organizations that allow and encourage spiritual expression are happier and more productive workplaces, in addition to enhancing a sense of meaning;
- Practitioners need to enhance their spirituality in order to be able to provide spiritual opportunities for the children and families that they work with;
- Spirituality and religion has some negative connotations due to historical criminalization/demonization of Aboriginal spiritual practices, and it is important to be aware of the comfort level of participants, and to also be accepting of spiritual differences; and,
- Using traditional values, such as the seven sacred teachings, or virtues posters, is a good way to focus on spirituality with children and families.

*Cindy Jamieson, MSW, is the Provincial Coordinator for Aboriginal Supported Child Development and the Provincial Office for Aboriginal Infant and Supported Child Development. She has extensive experience in both Aboriginal and mainstream child, youth and family services. She is Haudenosaunee. Cindy can be reached at: Email: [coordinator@ascdp.bc.ca](mailto:coordinator@ascdp.bc.ca)*

# Creating a Vision for Staff Interactions

By Marc Tatanasci Lalonde

Marc Tatanasci Lalonde is the Manager of Tsleil Waututh Child & Family Development Centre. He has 30 years' experience in the ECE field- 20 of which have been with First Nations Communities. He presented on "Creating a Vision for Staff Interaction" at the 2011 BC ACCS Training Conference and he graciously agreed to share key points from the 1 ½ hour workshop.

In attempting to create environments where staff are committed to proactive resolutions, the first step is to develop a vision everyone can agree to. The three points I will focus on are:

- 1) Visions come from values;
- 2) Be comfortable with tension and value diversity; and
- 3) Create a tipping point for change.

Any vision is a reflection of values and values are something we tend to ignore. Our personal values are developed in childhood and they guide all of our actions. The most amazing thing about values is their hidden power over how we view the world. We are often unconscious of the values we hold and how they influence the way we behave. They determine our beliefs, and we are more aware of what we believe than the value that is behind it.

In order to begin a discussion on how to interact with each other, staff need the time and space to explore their values. This will set a stage for the process to begin the co-creation of a shared vision. Through this process some very different values are identified. We all understand each person has a right to her own values and beliefs, but seldom think about how we tend to impose our ideals on others.

No one can make us feel anything, yet we are often offended by what others say or do. Why does this upset us? We are triggered by our unconscious values and believe others should conform to them. Think about it. What do others do that really bugs you? Are others purposely doing these things to upset you? No. They are just doing their own thing. You, however, are taking it personally and creating an internal story about their intent. What upsets you the most about what other people say or do, says more about you than it does about others. This is why open discussions about values and beliefs often create tension.

Tension is good, as long as we understand and respect one another. We have a right to our views but we can also be curious about listening to others. In Scott Page's book *The Difference* he explains how the more diverse the group, the greater the solutions and ideas. By building on other people's ideas, a group can reach much higher than even the most talented person in the group. This is how group synergy is formed, where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Think of it as a pizza.

A pizza has many different ingredients, and each has a unique taste. Combining all those tastes together is one thing, but it still needs to be baked. Once you bake a pizza, even with some very distinct ingredients, the result is a tasty meal. Groups are like pizza. By combining diverse thinkers together and having constructive tension as the heating process, all the ideas come together to form a delicious creation.

Early Childhood Educators (ECE's) understand that the process is more valuable than the end product and the same applies to adults. Our group spent over six months to come up with a policy on how to deal with left over lunches. We had a few people who had strong opposing views. We focused on the issues and kept personalities and personal agendas out of the discussion. I was thrilled with the progress and completely detached from concerns over how long this was taking. The end result is a policy everyone could buy into and more ingenious than any of us could have done on our own. The same held true for the process we went through to develop our vision on how we are committed to interact with each other.

The evolving process was a cycle of continuous discovery, learning, reevaluating and readjustments. Once the group co-creates a shared vision, then it is a matter of implementing and committing to it. As Malcolm Gladwell explains in his book *The Tipping Point*, once a group of early adopters are established, others will follow. Eventually enough joiners tip the scale and everyone jumps on the band wagon. Leaders must first be exemplary in their own behaviour and ensure their actions adhere to the vision. They should also recognise when others are performing according to the vision, acknowledge them for their actions and reward or build on their efforts. In this way, small positive changes can lead to the long-term goals. An inspirational book that tells a story of how this can happen is called *Fish*. Another great resource for change is John Kotter's classic, *Leading Change*.

Change is a process, and as ECE's we understand it is also a wonderful opportunity for learning. In order to facilitate the process we must co-create a vision everyone can buy into. We must realise how strong personal values are, and while respecting them we must understand how important creative tension is. Tension is the heat that will meld all the divergent ingredients together to form a delicious creation. Once the ideal is set, leaders need to support and create a core group which will tip the scales for everyone to join in.

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# Kids Have Stress Too!®



## Claude Painter shares about some of the key concepts from the one day workshop she led as part of BC ACCS's 2011 Training Conference

**BC ACCS:** Please provide a brief explanation to the background behind “Kids Have Stress Too!®”. Why did you choose to become involved?

**Claude:** “Kids Have Stress Too!®” is connected to the Psychology Foundation of Canada, a national registered charity that is dedicated to supporting and strengthening families across Canada. The foundation was founded in 1974 with the mission to help people understand and use sound psychological research in their daily living.

Over the years, Psychology Foundation of Canada has created a whole bunch of educational resources for professionals and families. “Kids Have Stress Too!®” is one of the resources developed for ECE professionals and parents of children from infancy to age 7.

What really drew me to the “Kids Have Stress Too!®” program is that, in its development, input and involvement of ECE professionals and parents were actively sought out and included. There is a very strong community influence in the content.

**BC ACCS:** Stress has become a four letter word in our society. What do you define as stress? Is it all bad?

**Claude:** Stress enables us to survive. It's a motivator, helping us to get out of danger. It can also help us to set goals and to improve our lives. Negative stress, also known as distress or chronic stress, leads to a reoccurring mode of fight or flight that can over time compromise our immune systems and affect our physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

**BC ACCS:** How do “kids have stress too?”

**Claude:** As children or as adults, when we are learning something for the first time, we tend to be more sensitive or alert to the stimuli in our environment and the interactions we have with others. This process can result in both positive and negative stress responses. To better cope with these responses, children need adults who can provide reassurance; support and opportunities to practice the skills that children need to make better sense of their world and their growing abilities. For adults and young children alike, stress is a normal part of everyday life. At the same time some stress can become overwhelming, affecting a child's ability to concentrate, to learn and get along with others. Children therefore benefit from being taught healthy ways to cope with the changes and the challenges that evolve in their daily lives. The “Kids Have Stress Too!®” program offers many strategies and ideas that can teach children, families and professionals how to relieve anxieties and further promote healthy development.

**BC ACCS:** What are 2 things that a parent could immediately implement to alleviate some of the “bad stress” for their children

**Claude:** One of the first things a parent can do is to remain calm, offer validation and give reassurance.

Example: If a child is crying because a sibling took a toy away, the parent can approach the child and state in a calm voice, “I see that you are upset. I am here to help and together we can find an answer for what has just happened.”

This approach is not just about fixing the problem for the child but is also about including the child in the process of finding the solution.

When providing validation and reassurance for an infant, this can be done by the parent remaining calm and speaking in soothing tone of voice. They can offer the infant a cuddle as a form of physical reassurance. Then the parent can proceed through a check list of potential issues: “Is the baby hungry? Does she or he have a soiled diaper? Or is the baby seeking emotional comfort?”

### Claude Explains Stress-the Four Letter Word

Technically, stress enables us to survive. It is a physical response of the body to demands that are made upon it. The demands could be a person, situation or thought that triggers a stress response. Both positive stress (also known as eustress) and negative stress (also known as distress) influence stress responses.



When confronted with a stressful situation our body springs into action to increase our abilities to act quickly to remove ourselves from potential dangers. The “fight or flight response” is made up of a number of physical reactions; to provide more energy our body increases the release of cholesterol, fatty acids and sugar in the blood.

To provide more oxygen, our body increases blood pressure and heart rate. To slow the breakdown of muscle tissue, stomach acids increase and production of protein decreases. Also, our immune system partially shuts down.

Unfortunately, too much stress over time can cause a number of symptoms that may eventually lead to compromised immune systems, disruptive changes in our behaviors, mental disorders, misperceptions, illness and debilitating diseases. Understanding why stress occurs and tuning in to how it can affect us, can also guide us to plan, implement and evaluate healthy strategies to cope with some of the stressors we face and to achieve more harmonious lifestyles. There are many techniques and methods that people apply to achieve these abilities. The key is to practice nurturing yourself as well as others!

**BC ACCS:** What are 2 things that an Early Childhood Educator could immediately implement to alleviate some of the “bad stress” for children in their care?

**Claude:** In a group setting, it is really important to develop trustful relationships with the children and their families. Early childhood educators and caregivers need to get to know the children as individuals as well as who they are in relation to the other children in the facility. As they are developing those relationships, they will have a better sense about how to approach a child and validate, give reassurance and help that child problem solve.

**BC ACCS:** During your one day workshop at BC ACCS Training Conference, you often spoke of “preserving the dignity of a child”. What does this mean to you?

**Claude:** It is a core belief and value that I have. It is important to truly appreciate and recognise that children are worthy individuals who are learning about life and who require compassion, patience and respect. Children have human rights that are unique to them as children. For example, they have the right to play, the right to have and express their own thoughts and the right to be safe. They

deserve to be protected and nurtured versus controlled, dictated to and objectified. I believe it is critical to treat children in a fair and considerate way when we are trying to help them cope with their anxieties and stressful situations.

**BC ACCS:** Where can we go for more resources such as “Kids Have Stress Too!”?

**Claude:** The Psychology Foundation of Canada’s website has lots of great resources and many of them can be immediately downloaded for free. Website: [www.psychologyfoundation.org](http://www.psychologyfoundation.org)

*Cindy Andrew is program consultant for BC and the “Kids Have Stress Too!” program. Contact her to set up workshop and training  
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## Hay Chxwq’a! Kukstemc! Meegwetch!

We raise our hands in appreciation and respect to those who supported the BC ACCS Training Conference financially and in-kind.

We are grateful for the support we received from:

- National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health
  - Public Health Agency of Canada
  - First Nations Health Council
- Native North West / Garfinkel Publications
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  - Daniel Le Chocolat Belge

We also appreciated working with Health Canada’s First Nations Inuit Health Branch to assist in the travel for the on reserve Head Starts staff.



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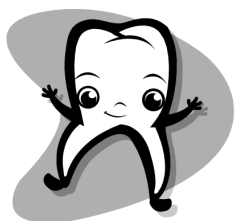
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## Dental Hygiene for Our Little Ones

Yvonne Smith, the community Dental Hygienist for Sea to Sky region of Vancouver Coastal Health presented an 1.5 hour workshop on “Easy Ways to Give Children Healthy, Happy Smiles” at BC ACCS’s 2011 Training Workshop. She shares some insight about good dental hygiene for young children.

### Did You Know?

- Wean babies from the bottle by age 12 months. Some babies can be weaned as early as 9 months!
- It is best to introduce regular cups right away. Sippy cups cause the same problems as drinking out of the bottle.
- If you NEVER introduce it, you NEVER have to TAKE it AWAY, so after breastfeeding move straight to a regular cup.

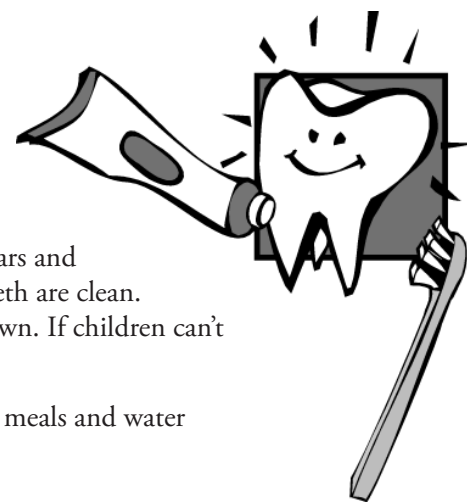
### About Juice

- Juice is not healthy for your child. Offer milk at meals, water anytime.
- If you want to take juice out of your family’s diet, it can take a week or more for children to switch to water. Remember that they will drink water when it is the only liquid available. Be patient, remember offer milk at meals and water anytime.
- If you NEVER introduce it, you NEVER have to TAKE it AWAY, the only liquids your child needs are milk and water. Speak to a nutritionist if your child cannot drink milk.



Sippy cups, from a speech and language point of view, interfere with the development of an important skill – sipping. Sipping from a cup helps build important muscles for speech.

Juice can act as an appetite suppressant. Milk should be served only at meal time. You do not want the children to quench their thirst with milk but with water. If milk is available all the time they won’t eat the food and will fill up on milk.



### What Routines are Important for Good Dental Hygiene?

Children should have their teeth brushed for them twice a day with fluoride toothpaste. For children under the age of 3, toothpaste should be the size of a grain of rice. For children 3 years and older, toothpaste should be the size of a pea. Adults must brush for the child to ensure the teeth are clean. Make sure to look in the mouth so you know when they are brushing well enough on their own. If children can’t tie their own shoelaces they also can’t brush well enough on their own.

Ideally children should be eating 6 times a day – 3 meals and 3 snacks. Remember milk with meals and water anytime.

### Why are These Routines Important?

Brushing- if you leave plaque on the teeth due to lack of brushing, every time a child eats, the food + bacteria in the plaque = acid that decays the teeth. Brush twice a day, morning and night.

Why three meals and three snacks? This limits the number of acid attacks on the teeth (remember: every time a child eats, the food + bacteria in the plaque = acid that decays the teeth). You do not want acid attacks/ tooth decay happening all day long, you wish to limit this to 6 times a day. The teeth can handle the exposure 6 x a day. The side benefit is good nutrition and regularity.

An easy way to stick to the routine is to immediately put food and milk away after meal/snack time. Make water available anytime.

*Yvonne Smith has over 30 years’ experience as a dental hygienist and her focus with parents, caregivers and educators is to make dental care of children easy, understandable and fun.*

# Elder Rose Point- 2011 Perry Shawana Award Recipient

In recognition of her commitment and dedication to First Nations children and families, the Board of BC ACCS has chosen Rose Point as the recipient of the Perry Shawana Award for 2011.

Rose Point is from Thompson River, Seabird Island. She married Cagney Point of Musqueam, where she still resides. She has four sons, two grandchildren, and a great granddaughter.

Rose is the Elder in Residence for post-secondary institutions at the UBC First Nations House of Learning, British Columbia's Institute of Technology (BCIT) and the UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health. She has received numerous awards for early childcare education service.



Rose Point with Preschoolers and Mothers Circa 1970  
Photo Credit Suzanne Ahearne

Rose has been a long-time committee member of Musqueam education, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Coastal Health and UBC Institute of Aboriginal Health and Native Indian Teacher Education Program at UBC. She has witnessed seven generations of her own family, fostered many children and was trained by family midwives. Rose shares her long standing knowledge about traditional infant child care, medicinal plants & general health care practices as she worked many years within the health care systems.

Rose is a shining example of lifelong learning and community service. She has been a forerunner in Aboriginal Early Childhood Education and she continues to inspire future leaders as an Elder Advisor for Aboriginal Students attending BCIT.



Rose Point with Welcome Figure, Musqueam

## About the Perry Shawana Award

Each year, the Board of Directors of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BC ACCS) presents the Perry Shawana Award. Perry was a barrister and solicitor specializing in Aboriginal issues in the law. An Anishnawbe from the Serpent River First Nation in Northern Ontario, Perry worked tirelessly to advance Aboriginal self-determination and community based child care programs. Perry played a key role in the founding of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society in 1995.

As a tribute to Perry's significant contributions to Aboriginal child care, the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society honours an individual or group not directly involved in the ECE field but who through volunteerism, advocacy, research and policy has contributed to and advanced the notion of "safe/nurturing communities" and/or "quality" child care and early learning services for BC First Nations children and their families.

Recipients of the award are invited to become "lifetime friends" of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society.

## An Indian woman's triumph

Rose Point starts school, becomes a teacher

By DONNA ANDERSON

A meaningful life is all that Rose Point wants for her four sons. She has no great burning ambition as to which way they should go in the future. She doesn't see them striking out for Red Power — but she does want them to be proud of their Indian heritage. And most of all, she does want them to get an education and become happy, self-fulfilled individuals. Education is so important to Mrs. Point that she was the



sight-half family unit. They do things together and their interests are varied. The three eldest boys play hockey at Kwantlen Arena — one is the captain of his team and all have won trophies. Point drives them up in the early morning and Mrs. Point picks them up in time for school. Everyone in the family runs out for the games and Point is one of the loudest of the spectators. The boys also take swimming lessons. There go to public school off the reserve, and the youngest attends preschool with his mother. Point works in a shipyard repairing fish boats. Mrs. Point said the best thing about her job — other than the children themselves — is that she is still here where her children and husband leave in the morning and she's there when they return at night. Her salary is paid by the education committee on the reserve who, in turn, get their funds from the department of Indian affairs.

public school system in Courtenay. The collection visits public schools in the city but "not as often as I would like," said Mrs. Point. "It's not that I'm not asked; it's just that my own time is a problem." (Her own time is being at home with her husband and children.) Some time ago Mrs. Point became interested in Sault Ste. Marie, Quebec, and eventually found herself attending classes in her basement for women off the reserve. She spent her own years — she remembers New Zealand well — because it is much longer than that produced here — and makes her own eyes. She makes her eyes from riches she scrapes off the trees near her home. "You get different shades from different trees," she says. "You get a beautiful color from cherry trees, and the trees come from British and pear. If you had certain shades with them, you will produce a

department of the Union of B.C., is developing a school that will teach its children to better understand other Canadian children. The curriculum is a lesson, the extra course challenge, and the work children is a challenge to Point. Rose Point stands though she doesn't touch feet — she has her "meat and fish."

And at a time when the Indian Indian is searching his identity, she and her husband are giving their sons one of the greatest in life — their heritage.



# 2011 Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarships



The goal of the Mary Thomas Memorial ECE Scholarship is to recognize and reward two Aboriginal ECE students each year for the highest academic achievement in a Basic Early Childhood Education program and in a Post-Basic Early Childhood Education program at an approved educational institution and ECE program within British Columbia. The \$1000 Basic ECE Scholarship is awarded to the eligible applicant with the highest overall academic standing of all the eligible applicants. The \$1500 Post-Basic ECE Scholarship is awarded to the eligible applicant with the highest overall academic standing of all the eligible applicants.

## Recipients for 2011: Shawnee Swayze-Kristan & Caroline Chandler

### 2011 Scholarship for Basic ECE students

Shawnee Swayze-Kristan, Siska Indian Band, is attending the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology in Merritt. She completed her Basic ECE Certificate at NVIT in 2011 with a 4.05 GPA, and is currently in her second year doing her post-basic ECE training. She will obtain an ECE diploma once her post-basic training is completed.

### 2011 Scholarship for Post-Basic ECE students

Caroline Chandler, Squamish Nation, attended the Native Education College in Vancouver. She completed her Post-Basic ECE combined Infant/Toddler (IT) and Special Needs (SN) Diploma in 2011 with a 4.31 GPA. Caroline was also the recipient for the 2010 Basic ECE scholarship



*Congratulations to both Shawnee and Caroline. You are an inspiration to the next generation and your academic achievement is the start of a great professional legacy in Aboriginal early childhood development and care.*

## ECE Resources at your Finger Tips!

BC ACCS's Resource Library features over 1300 books, videos, CD's, DVD's and newsletters available for loan to members. Topics include child development, Aboriginal lore and legends, children's stories, health, program administration various types of curriculum and more. We also offer publications for purchase on a variety of child development topics.

- To access our online catalogue go to: [www.acc-society.bc.ca](http://www.acc-society.bc.ca)

Keep in touch & stay informed about the latest ECE news, resources, announcements, funding, job postings and events.

- Subscribe to our weekly FREE e-newsletter, send a blank e-mail to: [aboriginalchildcare-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:aboriginalchildcare-subscribe@yahoo.com)
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### We Value Children

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### Nos enfants : notre richesse

## BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

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Readers are invited to reprint articles provided proper credit is given. We welcome the submission of articles, book reviews, artwork, photos, letters and poetry.

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