



## Partners for Children is Growing!

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*We thought this would be a great opportunity to introduce the whole team.*



Alaena Warner

The newest member to join our team is **Alaena Warner**. Alaena is our new Family Programs Facilitator who will be coordinating and delivering our new Family Drop-in pilot program, which is being funded by Health and Social Services at the Yukon Government. Alaena chatted with our own Jo Lukawitski to help us get to know her better.

**What is one of your passions in life?** I love to make things. I like painting and drawing and find tactile things like crafts really help me to relax. I have two children who love drawing and so I'm delighted to share that with them.

**Favourite colour?** – Green

**Dog or cat?** Having had both, I say dog. I just can't deal with the litter box.

**Tell us more about your background...** I've worked for over a decade providing support to families in crisis. I started a social work degree around the same time, but left it, and the Yukon, for a time, to study Fine Art. I completed my social work degree this past year. My experiences led to an interest in mental health, perinatal support and working with families. I am particularly fond of working with groups, as having the insights and supports of a broader group of people is powerful.



Jo Lukawitski

**Is there anything you'd like to tell our newsletter readers?** I'm just feeling really grateful and excited to be in this new position, organizing our new drop-in program. Thank you to everyone who has been so welcoming, and I hope to see you and your little ones at our drop ins.

### OUR TEAM ALSO INCLUDES:

**Jo Lukawitski**, our Family Programs Facilitator/Trainer. Jo has been with us for nearly 8 years and delivers all of our parenting programs

Continued on page 13.



# partners for children contact information

Phone: 1-867-332-5990

Email: [ContactUs@partnersforchildren.info](mailto:ContactUs@partnersforchildren.info)

Mail: Partners for Children  
108C Copper Road  
Whitehorse, YT  
Y1A 2Z6



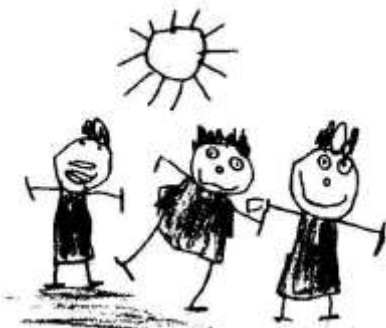
You may request a PDF version of this newsletter by emailing [newsletter@partnersforchildren.info](mailto:newsletter@partnersforchildren.info) or checking our website: [www.partnersforchildren.info](http://www.partnersforchildren.info)

You may also request to have it mailed by Canada Post.



Coordinators: Katie Swales, Rebecca Fenton

Copy Editor: Leslie Peters



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The Partners for Children newsletter is edited and produced through the Network for Healthy Early Human Development Yukon (NHEHD).

The views expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official

policy of Partners for Children, NHEHD Yukon or the Public Health Agency of Canada.



# Community Websites

Autism Yukon  
[www.autismyukon.org](http://www.autismyukon.org)

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yukon  
<https://yukon.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca>

Child, Youth and Family  
Treatment Services  
<https://yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-wellness/get-counselling-and-support-families-youth-and-children>

Child Development Centre  
<https://cdcukon.ca/>

Department of Education  
Early Learning and Childcare  
Programs  
<https://www.yukon.ca/en/early-childhood-learning-and-programs>

Early Learning Program, Yukon  
University  
<https://www.yukonu.ca/programs/early-learning-and-child-care>

Family Law Information Centre  
<https://yukon.ca/en/family-law-information-centre>

Fetal Alcohol Society Yukon  
[www.fassy.org](http://www.fassy.org)

Hospice Yukon Society  
[www.hospiceyukon.net/](http://www.hospiceyukon.net/)

LDAY Centre for Learning  
[www.ldayukon.com](http://www.ldayukon.com)

Network for Healthy Early Human  
Development  
[www.NHEHDYukon.org](http://www.NHEHDYukon.org)

Partners for Children  
[www.partnersforchildren.info](http://www.partnersforchildren.info)



Recreation & Parks  
Association of the Yukon  
(RPAY)  
<http://www.rpay.ca>

Skookum Jim Friendship  
Centre  
<https://skookumjim.com/programs/>

**Victoria Faulkner Women's  
Centre**  
<http://www.vfwomenscentre.com/>

Volunteer Yukon  
<https://www.volunteeryukon.ca/>

Inclusion Yukon  
<https://www.inclusionyukon.org/>

Yukon Child and Youth Advocate  
[www.ycao.ca](http://www.ycao.ca)

Yukon First Nations Education  
Directorate (YFNED) Early Years  
[www.yfned.ca/earlyyears](http://www.yfned.ca/earlyyears)

Yukon Literacy Coalition  
[www.yukonliteracy.ca/](http://www.yukonliteracy.ca/)

Yukon Public Libraries  
<http://yukon.ca/en/libraries>



## CYFN's Family Preservation Services

Family Preservation Services is a department of the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) that focuses on providing support to Yukon First Nations and Indigenous families. The Family Preservation team is available to help families navigate Yukon Government's complex Family and Children's Services system and offer them support in times of need.

We recognize that Yukon First Nations and Indigenous families, extended families and communities are in the best position to make decisions about their children and youth. Alongside Yukon First Nations and Indigenous families, parents, children and youth, CYFN's Family Preservation Services team will work with them in a respectful way, building on their strengths to achieve their goals.

### Client Services:

Our friendly team is here to help and support families. Our Family Preservation Case Workers and Family Support Workers can help in various ways, whether it's providing support for visitation and access, at meetings or in court, or assisting in finding housing or transportation. Those needing support are encouraged reach out to learn more about how our team can help.



Mary Billy Smith and grandson Greg Smith (CAFN)

### Cultural Programming:

Connection to family, community and culture is fundamental for Yukon First Nations and Indigenous families and children and youth in care. Our programming can help guide and support them in making these important connections. Our Family Preservation Programming team hosts cultural programming opportunities year-round, including: traditional medicine making, drum making, ice fishing, salmon smoking, tanning and canning, tufting, painting, and dry meat making. We also organize summer and harvest family camps. These events are instructed by Yukon First Nations knowledge keepers and Elders. If



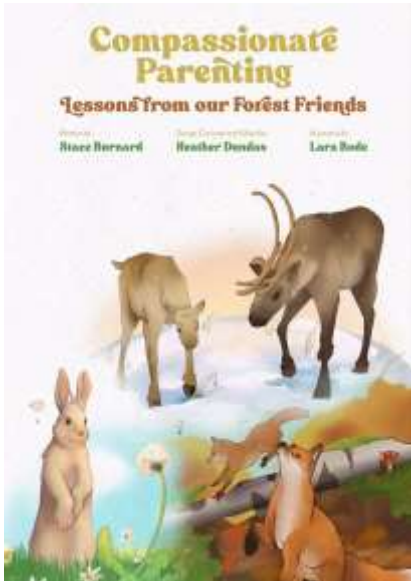
you know children and youth in care who would like to participate in these monthly

Cultural Connections events, reach out and come join the fun!



Call us at 867-393-9200  
 or 1-833-364-0509  
 Or email us at [family.preservation@cyfn.net](mailto:family.preservation@cyfn.net)

# Community Spotlight: New Local Resource for Yukon Parents



What does a nurturing home look like? And how do families create one?

Produced by Cloudberry Wellness in collaboration with the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate (YFNED), Compassionate Parenting provides a culturally-safe overview of important qualities that parents want to model for their children.

According to author, Stace Burnard, “Parenthood is one of life’s most

challenging undertakings. Difficult to prepare for, unpredictable and overwhelming. Being a parent can evoke intense feelings of guilt, self-doubt, frustration and/or anger, and there are so many questions.

“Should I be strict or loving? Does the choice have to be so black and white? What about consistency and follow-through? What are my kids learning from my parenting in the long run? Am I making a mistake? Am I just trying hard not to be my mother/father?”

“No one is born with parenting skills. We ask other parents for advice, or go onto forums. But the answers seem to come from all ends of the spectrum. No one seems to know what is ‘right.’ So, we read a parenting book. Then, that seems to contradict what another parenting book says.

“This book focuses on promoting a

Continued on page 19.

## Parent-Child Mother Goose

Discover the power and pleasure of rhymes, songs, and stories



A FREE group for caregivers and little ones ages 0-5 yrs.

Thursdays, January 12—March 9th  
With elders at the Thomson Centre  
10:30 am – 11:30am

Follow Partners for Children on FB and Register on **EventBrite**.

Some spaces reserved for families who work with the CDC.

If this is you, please call 456-8182 ext. 190.





(Upstairs in the Canada Games Centre)

**Fun, free, drop-in programs for you and your child!**



**Come visit!**



Mon/Tues/Weds & Fri 9am-12pm; 12:30-3:30  
Thurs. 12:30-3:30pm (Closed for lunch &  
Sat. 9am-12pm, 1pm-3pm cleaning at noon)

Winter programs run  
Jan. 5 to Mar. 11, 2023

Please stay home if  
you are sick.

Sanitize hands frequently.

All programs are based on  
adult-child participation.

For more information, call  
668-8698 / 668-6535

 Yukon Family Literacy Centre

 @yukonfamilyliteracycentre

*Families learning together  
through playing!*

The FLC will be closed Feb. 24 & 25.



For more information, call  
668-8698 / 668-6535

 Yukon Family Literacy Centre  
 @yukonfamilyliteracycentre

*All programs are based on child-adult participation.*

## MORNING PROGRAMS 10-11 am

**Monday: Baby Sign • 0-24 months** Practice basic sign language, sing, relax, and socialize with your baby.

**Tuesday: Power of Painting • All ages** Get your smocks on and discover the joys of painting and colour!

**Wednesday: Construction Zone • All ages** When children build and create they learn so much. Experiment, problem solve and construct in this hands-on exploratory program.

**Thursday: Reserved for group use. Closed to the public. Call 867 668 8698 to book for your literacy-based group.**

**Friday: Hooked on Stories • All ages** Explore stories and storytelling through interactive play.

*All open hours are drop-in free play time!*

## AFTERNOONS + SATURDAY

*check times on front*

### Family Free Play Drop-in: All Ages

Enjoy crafts, play dough, painting, reading, and more. When children play they build skills that are crucial for healthy development. Playing together as a family is not only fun, it also fosters physical, social, cognitive and emotional growth.

★ *All programs are drop-in and everyone is welcome.  
No wristband or registration required.* ★



**Fridays, January 13—Feb 3**  
**10:30 am - 12:30pm**  
**Partners for Children, 108 Copper Rd**

Promoting Mental Health in Young Children

Register on [EventBrite](#)

Handle With Care is a **free program** for parents with children 0-5yrs to:

- Meet** other parents and caregivers of young children
- Discuss** the ups and downs of everyday life
- Explore** solutions for dealing with stress and common parenting challenges
- Envision** ourselves and our child's future



## Mothering Your Baby



**A group for moms with babies under the age of 1**  
**Wednesdays, January 18—February 22**  
**10:30am – 12:30pm**

Mothers and their babies are invited to join us for sharing, connection, information and fun! We'll discuss the ups and downs of new parenthood, our journey into our identity as a mother, our changing bodies, lives and relationships, and all that YOU want to talk about.

Register with Partners for Children – 332-5990  
[familyprogs@partnersforchildren.info](mailto:familyprogs@partnersforchildren.info)



## Infant Massage

A **FREE 5-week series** for caregivers and their little ones ages 0-6 months.



Connecting with our babies through touch.

**Fridays, February 10—March 17**  
**10:30 am – 12:30pm**  
**Partners for Children, 108 Copper Rd**

Snacks and massage oil provided. Register on [EventBrite](#)



## Thank you



For your support!

We couldn't do it  
without you.

Partners for Children



## Leslie's Book Shelf:

### *Why I think reading with children is so important*



encompassing enough. But then I thought about why we read to children. There are so many reasons. The most obvious reason is to build a positive connection to early literacy. And then there are all of the moral or ethical themes that we can weave into books. We can also use books as tools to promote important developmental goals with children while we talk about “how Bob the Builder” feels, for example, or while we discuss “what do you think is going to happen next?” We can talk about sequencing, find colours and so much more.

Seven years ago, I completed my first issue as copy editor of the Partners for Children newsletter. I had read the newsletter while my children were growing and had appreciated the information and connections that it brought. In fact, the newsletter contributed to my desire to make child development my career.

Now the time has come for me to move on, and I'm feeling nostalgic. I love the philosophy of Partners for Children and the passion that the coordinators and staff have to promote healthy early childhood development—not only to parents—but to the community at large.

Often, children's needs are considered to be separate, and sometimes even politically conflicting with the needs of the economy, justice departments, and more. However, when we invest in healthy early development, children grow up to be more competent, emotionally stable and socially productive individuals. Many studies indicate that, over time, investing in early childhood even saves money for justice departments and produces more economically viable individuals. Partners for Children understands this and everything that the organization does contributes to making our society a more nurturing place for children. I feel so privileged to have been a part of this organization.

I struggled to find books for this last column. None of them seemed to be all-

But most of all, we can cuddle and have special moments together with our children while reading. Reading time is the perfect opportunity to work on attachment relationships—even if such things don't come naturally for us.

I'm not going to suggest specific books in this last column. I simply want encourage you to read with your children. Hold them tight and discuss the stories that you share together. Build relationship. Attachment creates resiliency. And we never know when our children will need to be strong and weather the storms that life will throw at them. I know that, as my children have had to face some unpredictable hard times, I have been thankful for how I invested in my relationship with them during their early years.



# THE EARLY YEARS

LOVE  
BUILDS  
BRAINS

The Early Years program supports young Indigenous parents and caregivers to ensure they have the tools they need to be their children's best and first teachers.

**Participants have access to:**

- An Early Years Visitor to walk beside you through pregnancy and the next five years
- Weekly family visits
- Early Years Family Centre for sharing, reading, playing, beading
- Elder-guided sharing circles
- Fun and practical workshops

**Who can participate:**

- Indigenous moms, dads and caregivers with kids between 0-5 years of age living in Whitehorse, Mayo, Pelly Crossing, Old Crow, or Ross River.

**To get involved, contact:**

(867) 667-6962 ext.123  
earlyyears@yfned.ca  
www.yfned.ca/earlyyears

Or stop by our office:  
207 Black Street



Autism Yukon and Yukon Search and Rescue present:

## Is your loved one at risk of becoming lost?

Consider signing up with Project Lifesaver:  
A frequency-based program to help find individuals with disabilities and/or dementia.

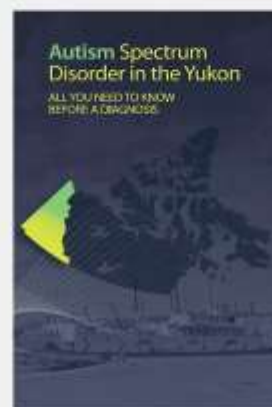
Call Autism Yukon to find out more . | 867.667.6406



### Autism Yukon's Info Booklets are now available in French AND English!



Check them out at:  
[autismyukon.org/](http://autismyukon.org/)



(Cliquez [ici](#) pour la version française)



(Cliquez [ici](#) pour la version française)

# Multicultural Connection

These sessions are designed for all families who have different ethnic backgrounds. Join us to connect with other parents and caregivers, learn about parenting in different cultures, and celebrate our diversity.



## Six Wednesday sessions:

January 11, 18 and 25, and February 1, 8 and 15, 2023  
From 11 am to 1 pm

Family Resource Unit Group Room  
NVD Place (old Canadian Tire)  
4201 4th Ave, Suite 330

**Free program for immigrants and refugees families!**  
**Lunch and transportation will be provided.**

For more information and to register, please contact Yoko Oda:  
867-332-1803 or [yoko.oda@yukon.ca](mailto:yoko.oda@yukon.ca)



## PARTNERS FOR CHILDREN OPEN DROP-IN



**A place for parents and caregivers of children 0 to 6 years of age.**

**Gather** and connect with each other

**Take part in** play, crafts and activities with your child

**Share** conversations about parenting and find support

**Gain access** to resources for your family

**Mondays, 10 am – 12 pm**, open drop-in with optional craft and activity. Guest visitors from local organizations at some drop-ins.

**Tuesdays, 12 – 2 pm**, open drop-in with optional craft and activity

**Thursdays, 10 -11 am**, Head, Heart and Hands open drop-in. Join us for songs, stories, rhymes, and to share and learn practical parenting tips for life's challenges (provided in partnership with the Family Resource Unit).

**Thursdays, 11 am – 12 pm**, open drop-in with optional craft and activity

**NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**

**SNACKS, COFFEE AND TEA PROVIDED.**

For more information contact Alaena at 332-4598 or [dropin@partnersforchildren.info](mailto:dropin@partnersforchildren.info)

Follow us on Facebook – Partners for Children





108 Copper Road  
 contact: Aleena at  
 dropin@partnersforchildren.info  
 332-9458

PARTNERS FOR CHILDREN  
 JANUARY  
 DROP-IN



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 OPEN DROP-IN 12-2 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	13	14 
15	16 OPEN DROP-IN 10-12 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	17 OPEN DROP-IN 12-2 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	18	19 Head, Heart and Hands Drop-in 10-11 AM Open Drop-In 11-12 PM	20	21
22	23 OPEN DROP-IN 10-12 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	24 OPEN DROP-IN 12-2 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	25	26 Head, Heart and Hands Drop-in 10-11 AM Open Drop-In 11-12	27	28 
29	30 OPEN DROP-IN: 10-12 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	31 OPEN DROP-IN 12-2 PM (optional craft/ activity tbd)	<p><b>All Drop-in programs FREE for families with children 0-6.</b></p> <p>Head, Heart and Hands offered          in partnership with the Family Resource Unit.</p>			



Katie Swales

Continued from front page.

and is now an experienced trainer of facilitators and teachers in many of these programs, including Parent Child Mother Goose, Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program and Handle with Care. Jo's knowledgeable, caring and fun manner make her sought out as an

appreciated facilitator of our parenting groups and trainings. Jo acts as a positive and supportive mentor to all newly-trained facilitators.

**Katie Swales** and **Rebecca Fenton** have been with Partners for Children since the 1990s when the program began. Both started as workshop facilitators and curriculum developers, and then in 1999, Katie took over coordination of the program. Rebecca joined her in co-coordinating in 2020. They both have extensive experience in and a passion for the early learning and child care field and find their work incredibly rewarding and enjoyable.



Rebecca Fenton

The Canadian Pediatric Society has created some great guides, including one for parents who choose not to vaccinate their children.



The guides can be downloaded at [immunize.ca/parents](https://immunize.ca/parents) or at [caringforkids.cps.ca](https://caringforkids.cps.ca)



*Yukon Public Libraries  
aim to provide books, audiovisual materials  
and other resources to meet the needs of  
Yukoners of all ages.*

*Libraries also provide fun and informative  
programming, safe, healthy, breast-feeding-  
friendly community spaces, library tours and  
room rentals.*

### **Story Time**

Whitehorse Public Library, 1171 Front St. Free. Drop in. Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call [667-5239](tel:667-5239)

**Baby Time: For children ages 6 - 24 months and their caregivers.**

Join us for rhymes, music and stories every Tuesday at 10:30 am.

From January 17 to March 7, 10:30 to 11:30 am

**Toddler Time: for children 2 - 4 years and their caregivers.**

Join us for rhymes, music, crafts and stories every Thursday at 10:30 am.

From January 19 to March 9, 10:30 to 11:30 am.



From the Yukon Libraries website.

### **Yukon Libraries:**

Beaver Creek Community Library  
Burwash Community Library  
Carcross Community Library  
Carmacks Community Library  
Dawson City Community Library  
Faro Community Library  
Haines Junction Community Library

Mayo Community Library  
Old Crow Community Library  
Pelly Crossing Community Library  
Ross River Community Library  
Tagish Community Library  
Teslin Community Library  
Watson Lake Community Library  
Whitehorse Community Library

# **TWO CHILD AWARDS AVAILABLE (Care Helps Individuals Learn and Develop)**

**Do you know a dedicated Yukoner in a licensed child care program, who honours young children through authentic, meaningful care?**

**AND/OR**

**Do you know a dedicated Yukoner who works to improve the lives of young children and families through change making and support?**

**Then why not nominate them for one of this year's  
Apryl Olsen CHILD Awards.**

**Email: [nhehdyukon@gmail.com](mailto:nhehdyukon@gmail.com) for a copy of the PDF document which contains all the information you need to know.**

**Submissions due by May 5th, 2023**

**Awards will be presented at NHEHDY AGM  
in May or June 2023.**





# Yukon CPNP Programs

*Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Programs (CPNP) are funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and can be tailored to meet individual community needs.*

The CPNP Programs take many forms: Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, Traditional Parenting

extended its program to include families with children up to two years, and Carcross welcomes families with children up to three years. If you are pregnant or just had a baby, or if you know someone who is pregnant, consider a visit to your local CPNP site. They would be happy to see you!



If you live in **Whitehorse**, you can choose from:  
-Healthy Babies, Healthy Futures at Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre: contact 667-4134 or [cpnpwhitehorse@northwestel.net](mailto:cpnpwhitehorse@northwestel.net)

-Skookum Jim Friendship Centre: contact [tracy.whalen@skookumjim.com](mailto:tracy.whalen@skookumjim.com)

-Bébé en santé, avenir en santé At Les EssentiElles  
Phone number: 867-668-2636  
Email: [pcnp@lesessentielles.ca](mailto:pcnp@lesessentielles.ca)

Programs, Lunch and Learn, Nutrition Heroes, walking clubs and more. CPNP programs support **pregnant parents and parents with young children**. This time of life can be one of the most difficult, tumultuous, transitional, and rewarding times in a person's life. A time when people need support!

-Teen Parent Centre: contact 667-8336 or [teenparentcentrecpnp@gmail.com](mailto:teenparentcentrecpnp@gmail.com)

In **Dawson City**: (867) 993-5149 or [cpnpdawson@northwestel.net](mailto:cpnpdawson@northwestel.net)

The programs offer support in a number of ways: free drop-in lunches; a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere; 1:1 nutrition consultation; nutrition supplements; information and skill building sessions; fun prenatal and postnatal physical activities; breastfeeding support; encouragement to choose healthy lifestyle choices; opportunities for personal development; and opportunities for parents to build their support network through community referrals, and of course, meeting other parents!

In **Carcross**: (867) 821-4251, contact Dayle Benoit. Please note: this program cannot accommodate Whitehorse residents.

In **Teslin**: (867) 390-2532 ext 371 or [Jodi.Jules@tte-teslin.com](mailto:Jodi.Jules@tte-teslin.com)

In **Watson Lake**: (867) 536-2125 or [wlcnpn.capc@gmail.com](mailto:wlcnpn.capc@gmail.com)

There are eight CPNP sites throughout the Yukon. Support for pregnant families and new parents is available at four sites in Whitehorse. There are also sites in Teslin, Carcross, Dawson City and Watson Lake. Each program welcomes pregnant parents and parents who have babies. Whitehorse welcomes families with babies up to one year old. Dawson has

Eating delicious food together is a big part of what happens at CPNP sites. If you are struggling to afford healthy food, please reach out to your CPNP Coordinator. If you have questions about discipline or your relationship with your children, CPNP Coordinators will help you to find the answers in a non-judgmental environment. They can help, or they will find someone who can!



# BÉBÉ EN SANTÉ, AVENIR, EN SANTÉ

DES SERVICES EN  
FRANÇAIS **GRATUITS** POUR  
LES FAMILLES PENDANT  
LA PÉRIODE PRÉNATALE  
ET POST-NATALE



- Repas-répit bi-mensuels et repas congelés à emporter
- Soutien à l'allaitement maternel et accès au réseau d'entraide Nourri-Source Yukon
- Accès à un centre de ressources (livres, DVD) sur différents thèmes de la périnatalité
- Prêt de matériel: tire-lait, coussin d'allaitement, porte-bébé
- Réseau d'échange de vêtements
- Lieu d'accueil et d'écoute
- Service de relevailles (aide à la maison après la naissance)
- Accès aux services d'une diététiste certifiée
- Vitamines pré et postnatales gratuites
- Réseau de parents francophones
- Accès gratuit à une machine à coudre, une laveuse et une sècheuse

Offert dans le cadre  
du Programme canadien  
de nutrition prénatale de  
l'Agence de la santé publique  
du Canada (PCNP)

Pour participer au programme,  
écrivez-nous:  
[pcnp@lesessentielles.ca](mailto:pcnp@lesessentielles.ca)

(867) 668-2636  
3089, 3ème avenue  
Whitehorse, Y1A 5B3



## Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office (YCAO)

2070 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Unit 19  
Phone:  
867 456 5575  
[www.ycao.ca](http://www.ycao.ca)

Young people have a voice!



## Yukon Family Mediation Service

**This free mediation service helps parents who are separating or divorcing to resolve conflicts and focus on the best interests of the children.**

This service is available for all Yukon communities. An impartial, trained mediator can help you make joint decisions about:

- ✓ parenting arrangements and responsibilities; and
- ✓ financial matters, such as child and spousal support.

**LEARN  
MORE**

Yukon Family  
Mediation Service  
at **867-667-5753**  
or email  
**flic@yukon.ca**

Yukon Family Mediation Service is made possible by Justice Canada.



## Connect then direct



### Children respond positively when they feel you care about them.

- 1 It is important to show your children that you hear them and care deeply about their needs. Children will listen and respond positively when they feel respected.
- 2 In times of conflict and **before giving direction, start with a compassionate connecting statement** like "I love you." Next, reflect back their feelings or mood, for example "I see you are frustrated." Then give them direction, for example "I need you to use words" or "I need you to change what you are doing."
- 3 Acknowledge your children's feelings by truly seeing their perspective and your relationship will be strengthened. They will trust you to be fair, and they will be more open to taking direction.

Continued from page 5.

different family dynamic, not just the challenges we have with our children. The book addresses these and other questions by looking at parenting from a relational, trauma-informed and emotional approach and outlines interventions that we as parents can use to help our children and at the same time, help ourselves form more fulfilling relationships."

Compassionate parenting is illustrated with wildlife scenes that Yukoners will recognize. Local artist Lara Bode created delightful paintings for this resource, and Heather Dundas designed and edited the publication. Be sure to pick up this book at one of your local non-profits and give it a read!

When a child walks in the room, your child or anybody else's child, do your eyes light up? That's what they're looking for.

— Tani Morrison

We believe that parents are the best teachers for their children.

## Parent-Child Mother Goose

Discover the power and pleasure of rhymes, songs, and stories



**A FREE group for caregivers and little ones ages 0-5 yrs.**

Tuesdays, January 17—March 14th  
Partners for Children, 108 Copper Rd  
10:30 am – 11:30am

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**Questions about your child's development?**

**Child Development Centre**

**Contact us. We can help.**  
Free & confidential services.  
A non-governmental organization.  
[cdcukon.ca](http://cdcukon.ca)

## The Child Development Centre has moved – again!

We have said “farewell” to our most recent therapy space at Copper Ridge Place. Our new temporary location is at 49 A Waterfront Place. This is located close to Motor Vehicles, and right beside Disability Services. You might remember it as the old Remax location (or the COVID testing centre). We began seeing children and families in our new location on January 3.

Our main therapy spaces where we see children and families are at this new location. Our Therapeutic Preschool and Early Learning Program Supports team will remain at 509 Alexander Street and we still have some office space at 133 Industrial Road. In addition, our Industrial Road location will also have a dedicated play therapy space, so if your child receives play therapy it may be at this location. Your therapist will let you know what location your appointment is at.

We want to thank families once again for being understanding and flexible with our move to another temporary home. We know change can be hard on children, who thrive on routine and knowing what to expect. We also want to thank staff for being adaptable with yet another move.

The end of moving to temporary locations is in sight though. We will be relocating to a new, permanent location at 206 Hanson Street in the summer of 2023. Until then, you can find us at the location below.



## Finding Hope Back Home: A Parent Story

By: Erin Brost

December 3, 2022, was the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and as the mother of a beautiful young girl with cerebral palsy who will be categorized as “disabled” her whole life, I found myself truly wanting to celebrate this day. I am filled with so much pride to be raising such a strong, smart, and curious little girl who I know is already and will continue to warm the hearts of so many people she meets. So, this past December 3, I decided to fill my social media feed with examples of initiatives that are promoting accessibility and inclusion – the fundamentals of making the world an equitable and welcoming place for those living with disabilities. **As I researched and posted about different initiatives, I had this moment where I kind of stepped back and realized how much I have learned since May of 2019 when our daughter Fia was born.** I scanned the social media groups that I’m part of – multiple tube-feeding groups, the Hope for HIE parent group, multiple cerebral palsy parent groups and networks, a local group for Yukon parents/caregivers that I recently started, and so many more. It made me realize what a long way we’ve come in just these few years and **so much of it comes back to our parent journey with the Child Development Centre.**



*Fia with her parents, Mitch and Erin.*

The Child Development Centre was one of the very first glimpses of hope that we encountered following receiving our daughter’s diagnosis in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Alberta (where she was medevaced to after birth in Whitehorse). Following her MRI in the NICU a few days after birth, we were delivered the news that the acute lack of oxygen she sustained during birth had resulted in permanent damage to her brain on the moderate to severe side of things with an official diagnosis of HIE (hypoxic ischemic encephalopathy). As expected, the HIE resulted in cerebral palsy and other compounding issues such as epilepsy, cortical visual impairment, and dystonia. All her food, water, and medicines go through a g-tube into her stomach and that will be lifelong. When they told us what we could expect it was all completely overwhelming to take in but **I specifically remember how adamantly the pediatric neurologist in the NICU spoke to us about the importance of starting physiotherapy as soon as possible.** Somewhere in between sleepless nights at Ronald McDonald House in Edmonton, and me learning to express my milk, and my husband sitting beside Fia’s NICU bed someone must have filled out a referral for us to the CDC and I remember the day I got a call from the receptionist there who said that they received our referral and would be sure to get us in ASAP when they re-opened in mid/end of August. **It was a relief to learn that there was something we could do to help our baby girl and that we could do that very thing back in the comfort of our hometown away from the medical world of the NICU.**

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And so it went that we began our therapy journey with CDC and I can't believe we are now almost entering 2023. Through CDC, Fia receives therapy for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, and occasionally child psychology. So much of what we have learned about how to be parents, how to advocate, how to research, how to be positive, how to be hopeful, how to believe in change, and so much more, has all been cultivated by our time spent working with the CDC. Each and every single therapist we have worked with has helped us to recognize and acknowledge our own skills and confidence by always including us in the plans and ideas for Fia's therapy. Whenever there is an obstacle, we're always invited to help find the solution. **Most importantly though it's been the gentleness, patience, and pride that they have brought into our house and lives** which has made the biggest difference in teaching us and creating such a proud space where none of us have ever put expectations onto Fia but rather we've always just watched to see what SHE wants to do. I am so incredibly grateful for this model of therapy because it took a weight off my shoulders of the milestone markers that I was googling about and just helped me accept Fia exactly as she is – which is perfectly herself. That is certainly something I couldn't have learned in any of the many specialized Facebook groups that I'm part of, and as I've described the analogy before: **it's as though the CDC helped us to set our compass in the right direction at the beginning of our parent journey.** The first compass is always the most important compass because it becomes your natural habit. I sincerely hope that every year when December 3 comes around that I continue to always feel filled with celebration, positivity, and hope rather than anger, grief, or disappointment (not in my daughter but in society at large for having too many barriers).



On a final note, I'd like to share about a new Facebook group that we recently created this past September called **Yukon Complex Kids – Parent/Guardian Group** ([www.facebook.com/groups/yukoncomplexkids](https://www.facebook.com/groups/yukoncomplexkids)). It is a **Yukon-only private Facebook group** specifically just for parents/legal guardians of medically complex children/youth/adult children living in the Yukon or for medically complex young adults 24 years old and younger living in the Yukon. The focus is to connect, to advocate, and to share knowledge. As well as possibly for doing buy/sell/trade of lightly used mobility/medical equipment/supplies (if Facebook platform permits it). It's a positive, solution-oriented group, and we just want to give similar local families a common online space to help each other out with questions and answers, or last-minute needs for urgent medical supplies (due to a highway closure or something for example). I wouldn't have had the confidence in myself to start a group like this if it wasn't for the communication skills I've built in the course of my parenting journey so far, and like I said much of it which has been cultivated by our experience with the Child Development Centre.

The Child Development Centre provides therapeutic services to Yukon children from birth to kindergarten entry, in all Yukon communities. Their services are free and confidential. You can reach the CDC at 867-456-8182 or via email at [info@cdcyukon.ca](mailto:info@cdcyukon.ca). A referral from a physician or other health care provider is not required, parents or caregivers can make a referral themselves. An online form can be found at [www.cdcyukon.ca/referral](http://www.cdcyukon.ca/referral) or a referral can be made over the phone.

## Kids' Grief and Resources for Helping

We all know that winter in the Yukon has some extra challenges due to the cold and dark. Sometimes this season can make our stronger emotions feel more intense than usual. This is true for the children in our lives as well.

Children whose families have been impacted by grief and loss may react to the ripple effects of these additional winter challenges.

Winter is also a season that can be wonderful for children to learn and grow. Fresh air, snow play, simple rituals of light and warmth can all help grieving children to process their losses and strengthen their understanding of how life will go on in a new relationship with the missing loved one.

At Hospice Yukon we know there are lots of ways to help children cope with loss. Adults can **create safe moments** for children to ask questions and talk about their feelings.

Children jump in and out of the puddles of their grief. They can feel sad or angry for a few minutes and then move on to a new activity. We can trust children to ask what they need to, express their changing emotions, or choose to engage at another time.

Caring adults can **let children take the lead** in their own grief



and healing. Depending on the age and experiences of the child, kids can come up with lots of questions! We don't have to know the answers – we can “wonder with” the child, which reassures them that their questions are welcome and normal.

Including children in **family and community rituals** can be helpful ways for them to feel less lonely in their loss. Rituals can be as simple as lighting a candle near a photo, or making the loved one's favourite meal and enjoying it together in an intentional way.

Kids are naturally creative. **Making things** – crafts, songs, stories, temporary outdoor “monuments” with natural materials, video clips, favourite foods – allows children to make choices and express their feelings in times of grief.

There are wonderful **resources to help us** support children coping with loss, including books, online videos, resource people, and groups for children and caregivers. The website [www.kidsgrief.ca](http://www.kidsgrief.ca) has many tips for parents and educators. We also have lots of resources at [www.hospiceyukon.net](http://www.hospiceyukon.net) and our welcoming staff regularly support professional and family caregivers and educators.

We can also help you connect with other supports, including specialized resources for children coping with traumatic deaths.

And especially in our Yukon winters, don't forget to take care of yourself as you support children in their grief.

At Hospice Yukon we encourage **self-care** with many online resources, experiential workshops, grief support groups and a range of other services to help the helpers. **You're not alone.**

### Kids Corner

We have many great books to help children understand death and grief, and anyone can borrow them from our library. The stories are age-appropriate, ranging from toddlers to young adults.

Titles like *When Dinosaurs Die* help grab kids' attention and let them engage with difficult topics in ways that feel safe and normal.



Visit us on our website or in person, to learn more about the books, programs and services we have to support you and the children in your care.

### *Kids Grief Counselling*

### *Kids Grief Support Groups*

### *Lending Library*

### *Professional Support*

### *Public Education*

409 Jarvis Street

Tel. 867-667-7429





**NHEHD Yukon stays true to its mission.**  
*Email [coordinator@partnersforchildren.info](mailto:coordinator@partnersforchildren.info) for more information.*

**Using the huge amount of scientific information that describes healthy early child development, we create small projects to meet our purpose.**

**One important project is simply spreading the message that babies matter and are most important. They are our future and our hope.**

**“How are the children?” could be the first words from you as a neighbour or coworker.**

**Become a NHEHD!  
Join the  
Network for Healthy Early Human Development!**

**[nhehd yukon@gmail.com](mailto:nhehd yukon@gmail.com)**

**Using  
community &  
scientific  
knowledge**

**help  
facilitate  
projects**

**with a diverse  
network of  
people and  
organizations**

**Result:  
through  
community  
participation, all  
Yukon’s children have  
the best start in life.**