



SJC Fall Newsletter

CELEBRATING OURSELVES: Share the good news about early childhood

Carrle Melsom

One of my favourite things to do is to attend the ECLC Awards of Excellence at Nova Scotia's provincial child care conference. Learning about the recipients' work, seeing them surrounded by colleagues, friends, family, and their daycare families makes me proud. The ceremony reminds me once again of the excellence so many of us bring to our work and how rewarding it is to be part of an amazing field that touches so many lives in such profound ways.

One of the frequent lamentations of our field is the lack of public recognition we receive. It is my belief that we can start to change this by recognizing our own achievements and value. It is important to take time to celebrate our work and share our stories with each other and the larger community. Awards programs such as the Early Childhood Learning and Care Awards and the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education give us the opportunity to dig a little deeper and truly recognize the quality and value of our work as early childhood educators.

Acknowledging the importance of celebrating ourselves and making time to put together a nomination package are two different things. I can hear you now, "It's a nice idea but we're overworked and underpaid

and we don't have time for anything extra." In reply I can only quote David Whyte; "The antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest. The antidote to exhaustion is whole heartedness. It is those things you do half heartedly that really wear you out."



Cheryl Benedict receives her Prime Minister's Award for Excellence from her MP Alexa McDonough.

The value of an awards program goes beyond the award itself. The value is in the process of developing the nomination, asking the questions and inviting people to share their stories of how someone's work has touched their lives. A family that Cheryl had worked

(Continued Page 2)

A Message from the Director

Dear ECE Colleagues,

With summer quickly ending and fall around the corner, you will notice some new faces at the College. We were so lucky to have Sonia Hage-Cameron as a full-time faculty member since 2003 and we wish her the best of luck in her new professional adventures. I'm sure I can convince Sonia to deliver a workshop or two next year.

Barbara Rowe, Student Success Counsellor, joined our team in July and Loreen Pawlowski, full-time faculty, started August 1, 2008. Welcome ladies.

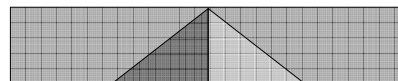
I have included an insert in the newsletter regarding the Continuing Education Child Care Program and the training funds available to the working sector. This is very exciting yet at the same time overwhelming for the College. We want

(Continued page 2)

Inside this issue:

- *Workshops September—December 2008*
- *NS Retention & Recruitment Initiatives*
- *New in the Resource Centre*
- *Tonks Visits the Toddler Room*

A publication informing the early childhood education community of events, services and professional development opportunities offered by St. Joseph's College of Early Childhood Education.



Please circulate and post this newsletter!

E-mail:

**ecestjoe@ns.sympatico.ca
to be added to our e-mail list.**



Celebrating Ourselves

(Continued from page 1) with many years ago shared this story in her nomination package: "We met Cheryl when our son was recovering from encephalitis that rendered him like a toddler again. On his initial day as he walked around aimlessly, we remember Cheryl saying; 'he just needs to learn to play again and everything will fall into place.' At the time it seemed simple but impossible. Cheryl was right ... it did."



Wee Care staff, past and present, join together to celebrate Cheryl Benedict's Prime Minister's Award. In celebrating Cheryl they celebrated themselves and over thirty years of quality service to the community.

Putting together a package means gathering letters, stories and quotes from children, families, colleagues and affiliated professionals. Imagine having a package like that to share and reflect on. Definitely something worth celebrating! I challenge all of you reading this to make some time this year to nominate an individual or program for an ECLC or Prime Minister's Award for Excellence.

Congratulations! 2008 NS Award Winners

Prime Minister's Award for Excellence

- *Bobbi-Lynn Keating (Peter Green Hall)*
- *Cheryl Benedict (Wee Care Centre)*
- *Amani Omar (Sunshine Playgroup)*
- *Joann Sweet (Kingstec Campus Learning Centre)*

ECLC Award of Excellence for Practice

- *Janice McKinnon (Peter Green Hall)*

ECLC Award of Excellence for Program

- *Small World Learning Centre (Bridgewater)*

Community Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

to deliver courses to as many early childhood staff as we can in as efficient a manner as we can—not an easy task!

Centre Directors and early childhood staff are invited to an INFO meeting to discuss these issues on Tuesday, September 23 at 6:00 pm. Please RSVP to 423-7114.

See you then,

Jane Cawley



Join us in welcoming ...

Barbara Rowe (left), Student Success Counsellor and Loreen Pawlowski, full-time faculty. Barbara and Loreen bring a love of early childhood and a diverse range of experiences working with learners of all ages. Barbara graduated from George Brown College with her ECE and most recently worked at Oxford Learning Centre as Director of Education. Loreen has a twenty-five year teaching career and has taught everything from preschool to graduate levels in Early Childhood Education and Bachelor of Education programs.



RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES **Early Childhood Development Services**

NS Early Childhood Education Assistance Program

This program provides a debt reduction incentive to eligible Early Childhood Education graduates who successfully complete an ECE diploma/degree program from an approved ECE training institutions.

Interested applicants can apply to participate in the program if they:

- Graduate from an approved full-time ECE diploma/degree program after April 1, 2008
- Received a student loan through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance program during the years of study in the ECE training program, and
- Provide proof that they are employed in a licensed day care centre or family home day care agency in Nova Scotia

NS Continuing Education Program for Child Care Staff

This program will provide financial support to child care staff to continue their education and enhance their skills and qualifications; it will also assist individuals interested in attaining an Early Childhood Education diploma /degree part-time while working in licensed child care.

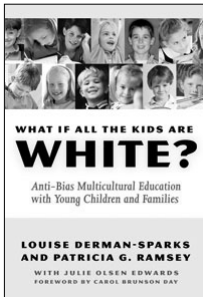
Eligible staff members will be reimbursed for courses taken if:

- The course is an approved course as determined by the Department of Community Services
- The course start date is on or after 1 June 2008
- The course is successfully completed and verification was provided from the institution
- The course is an eligible course based on the staff members' Early Childhood Education training level
- An eligible staff person who has an ECE credential or equivalency can take any approved course
- An eligible staff person who does not have their ECE credential or equivalency must take courses towards obtaining their ECE diploma/degree
- The course is 20 hours or more in duration

[**ELCC@gov.ns.ca**](mailto:ELCC@gov.ns.ca)

New in the Resource Centre

Lindsay Roach



What If All the Kids Are White? (370 DE) is an instructive read regarding the complexities early childhood educators face while teaching anti-bias multicultural education to young children. The book itself, however, centers on how to teach these outcomes in a setting where all the children are white. In particular, the authors Louise Derman-Sparks and Patricia G. Ramsey focus their attention on affluent families who chose to enroll their children in private schools. Such schools are generally lacking in student body diversity, making them an excellent example for the topic.

The book itself is a well balanced combination of information, suggestions and

“Although the book is meant to be educational and informative, the authors have also found a means to make it extremely enjoyable.”

examples of distinct situations an ECE may encounter while approaching this topic. There is a brief history of the evolution of racism, geared at helping the reader understand the mentality of “whiteness” along with witty anecdotes and shocking personal stories throughout. Although the book is meant to be educational and informative, the authors have also found a means to make it extremely enjoyable. It tackles 7 various learning themes which have been divided into two different parts – “Identity and Racism” and “Making

Connections and Becoming Activists”. Each part finishes with real life stories regarding how two different centres used different

versions of the themes to overcome various challenges.

In addition to examining the issue of teaching anti-bias multicultural education to children, the book focuses on issues that may arise due to the children’s guardians. In certain cases, guardians may have different views or opinions than what is taught in class. With each learning theme and each subject there are examples and advice for the reader, geared at helping ECEs work through these potential disagreements calmly and professionally. As it can often be harder to teach adults, as opposed to young children, to avoid racial stereotypes and judgments, this added perspective is another extremely useful factor of *What if All the Kids Are White*.

Together, Louise Derman-Sparks, a long-time human development faculty member at Pacific Oaks College specializing in research areas of race and education and multicultural education, along with Patricia G. Ramsey, a professor of Psychology and Education and Director of Gorse Child Study Centre at Mount Holyoke College, have produced a comprehensive read which tackles the challenging issues of multicultural interactions and education. I would recommend this book to everyone, particularly anyone who will at some point be influencing a child’s perspective on anti-bias racial knowledge.

Lindsay Roach is a summer student who worked at the College this summer.

Resource Centre Professional Development Opportunities for Centres or Groups

- Reaching In ... Reaching Out - Promoting Resiliency in Young Children in Child Care (2 day training)
- The Encouraging Classroom: Social Problem Solving for Preschoolers (full day workshop)
- Magical Environments (1/2 day workshop)
- Meeting the Challenge: Effective Strategies for Challenging Behaviours (full day or 3 sessions)
- What are we doing here? Reconnecting with your vision (documentation visit + workshop)
- Tumble Bugs Active Play (1/2 day leader training)
- The Affective Curriculum (five, 3-hour workshops focused on cultural competence, self-esteem, optimism, problem solving, etc.)
- Hold a Staff Meeting or Work Bee in the Resource Centre

Have a professional development need you don't see listed here? Call Carrie Melsom, SJC Resource Centre Coordinator at 420-1492 to discuss the possibility of a workshop designed for your centre or group.

Other Resource Centre books about anti-bias issues that may be of interest

- The Affective Curriculum - Teaching the Anti-Bias Approach to Young Children (375.10 HA)
- Diversity in Early Care and Education - Honoring Differences (370 GON)
- Celebrate! An Anti-Bias Guide to Enjoying Holidays (375.10 BI)
- We're More Alike Than Different! Feltboard Stories for Anti-Bias Curriculum in Early Childhood Programs (375.10 WE)
- Starting Small - Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades (375.10)
- Biracial Children and their Families (I 022)
- Tolerance Tales for the Early Grades (370 LOW)



**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**
Halifax, Nova Scotia



**ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

2326 Brunswick Street (2nd Floor)
Halifax, NS B3K 2Z3
Phone: 902-423-7114
Fax: 902-423-3346
ecestjoe@ns.sympatico.ca

www.stjosephsece.ns.ca



**Members of the Leading Edge
Discussion Group share strategies.**

At St. Joseph's College of Early Childhood Education, we provide an opportunity for students to study and gain experience in Early Childhood Education through a diverse range of courses and practical settings.

We are proud to lay the foundation for the personal and professional growth and development of our students. It is our hope and goal that SJC graduates continue to learn, practice and reflect throughout their years in early childhood education.



Join the crowd—become a member today

Take advantage of the many services provided with a St. Joseph's Resource Centre membership

Resources for the early childhood community



- Organization members \$100
- Individual members \$25

Tel: 420-1492 E-mail: resourcecentre@ns.sympatico.ca



Tonks Visits the Toddler Room

Melissa McCarthy

The children at Mawio'mi were thrilled when I brought my pet hedgehog in. I was nervous bringing her but the children surprised me and quickly learned to be gentle with her.

Faith, 2, was the first to be brave enough to kiss Tonks. She slowly leaned in then gave her a quick peck. Tonks is usually in a cage, but sometimes I take her out to let her run. Tonks helped a new boy transition into the centre – Tonks was out of her cage on his first day and he was very interested in her. He was quiet but seemed to enjoy watching Tonks. When the children were too loud near Tonks' cage, he put his finger to his mouth, "Shhh..."

There was a time when the weather was not cooperating so Tonks couldn't visit. The children asked where she was. "Where heyhog? Go find it" said Abby,

23 months. Luckily I found a hedgehog puppet to bring in. At the time, the children were not engaged during circle but when I brought the puppet in the children wanted to sing to Nymphadora.

When I went on vacation, I thought that it would be nice to take Nymphadora. I took pictures of her on the airplane, in restaurants, and near local attractions. When I came back, the children loved seeing the pictures! Some children had been on an airplane themselves, and others were going on one soon, so they enjoyed seeing Nymphadora on one.

I had no idea Tonks would become such a big part of the lives of the toddlers. The children took ownership of her. In one book, there is a picture of a hedgehog. We asked, "Who has a hedgehog?" Ella, 2, replied, "I do. In a cage in my house."

This experience reminded me that bringing your own interests into the classroom can



Nymphadora visits the toddler room.

jump start the children's interests. Tonks' visits led to many activities, such as, using spiky balls and paint to make hedgehog prints and pretending to be hedgehogs. Having a pet visit the room helped the children learn that animals need food, water, and quiet, gentle hands.

This curriculum captured our interest and grew out of us visiting, revisiting and expanding on that interest over time.