



June 2012



THE BRIDGE

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION

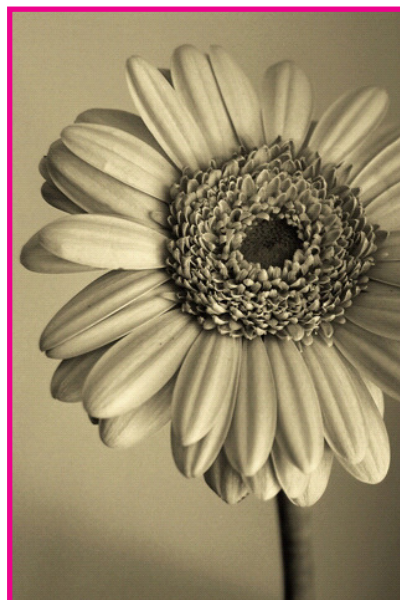
Children

We are responsible for children
who put chocolate fingers everywhere,
who like to be tickled,
who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants,
who sneak popsicles before supper,
who can never find their shoes.

And we are responsible for children
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of
sneakers,
who are born in places we wouldn't be caught dead,
who never go to the circus,
who live in an x-rated world.

We are responsible for children
who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,
who sleep with the dog and bury goldfish,
who cover themselves with Band-aids and sing off key,
who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink,
who slurp their soup.

And we are responsible for children
who never get dessert,
who have no blanket to drag behind them,
who watch their parents watch them die,
who can't find any bread to steal,
who don't have any rooms to clean up,
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,
whose monsters are real.



We are responsible for children
who spend all their allowance before Tuesday,
who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at
their food,
who like ghost stories,
who shove dirty clothes under the bed and never rinse
out the tub,
who get no visits from the tooth fairy,
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,
whose tears we sometimes laugh at, and
whose smiles can make us cry.

We are responsible for children
whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who have never seen a dentist,
who aren't spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move, but have no being.

We are responsible for children
who want to be carried and for those who must,
for those we never give up on and
for those who don't get a second chance,
for those we smother, . . . and
for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind
enough to offer it. by Ina Hughes

FEATURING...

- Kids These Days: The Journey to Graduation
- Child Care Arrangements for Foster Parents
- LDAA - Programs in Calgary and Edmonton

NOTICE

Deadline for submissions for next BRIDGE

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Norm Brownell



Hello to everyone who reads our Bridge and a big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the Casino on April 30th and May 1st in Calgary. We did manage to contribute around \$80,000 into the pool over the two days. In early August we should know what our share of the pool is.

The Transition into Adulthood Recommendations document is still being developed. Bryan Kelly who was working on the draft policy passed away suddenly on May 3rd. Bryan worked for Alberta Human Services for over thirty years and was in a Senior Management position in Region 6. He will be greatly missed. We will keep you updated as we continue to develop and finalize the recommendations on transitioning to Alberta Human Services.

On May 19th we held a work bee to help get the camp ready for the upcoming rental season. On June 15th & 16th we will be holding another work bee to build the docks for the children's summer programs. This will help as we will be able to tie up the paddle boats to the docks.

Our 13th Aboriginal Awareness Weekend promises to be another great weekend of learning, Karen Tweedle and her committee has been doing an excellent job of putting together the program. Please be aware of the change in dates this year as Aboriginal Awareness Weekend will be held August 24th, 25th, and 26th.

Have a great summer!

Every Child Matters: Strengthening Foster Families in Canada

In 2010, the Child Welfare League of Canada (CWLC) embarked on a journey to explore the world of the foster parent in Canada now, and where we need to be in the future. In partnership with the Canadian Foster Family Association (CFFA), we would like to invite you to complete a survey on your experiences as a foster parent. This survey has been funded by Human Resources Skills and Development Canada and developed by researchers at the University of Western Ontario and the University of Ottawa. This Canada-wide research survey will help identify: 1) Common foster parent retention practices; 2) Effective retention practices; and 3) Retention practices requiring improvement. Research outcomes will then be given back to provincial and territorial governments and stakeholders near the end of 2012. Your responses will only be shared with the researchers, and are completely anonymous. If you are or have been a foster parent and want to fill out the survey, please go to the following link. The survey will open in a separate fillable pdf form. It should take you 20-30 minutes to complete.

The survey can be found at: https://acrobat.com/?d=K5Rmuu-cbt*PngrY29bvOQ

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Katherine Jones

Once again I have been reminded that it is time for another Bridge edition to be printed and they are awaiting my report. I am amazed at how quickly time passes between editions.

I was very pleased to hear that the Honourable Minister David Hancock will remain as Minister of Human Services. The Alberta Foster Parent Association appreciates the work he does and his commitment to make improvements to the foster care system in Alberta. We look forward to our continued work with his Ministry.

Once again, it is the time of year that is extremely busy here in the office preparing for our year-end audit. I would like to thank everyone for ensuring that their expense claims were in to our office on time for us to close the books. We do realize how difficult it can be when we are all so busy. We appreciate your efforts in accommodating us.

The camp committee has begun organizing and planning for the Aboriginal Awareness Weekend which is scheduled for August 24 – 26th, 2012. Karen Tweedle and her team are organizing the Aboriginal Weekend and I feel confident that we will once again have some exceptional learning experiences to look forward to.

Organization and planning for the children summer camp programs is also underway. They are always in need of some adult volunteers, especially a nurse or someone with a medical background. If you are interested please contact the AFPA at 1-800-667-2372. If you or anyone you know is looking for a place to bank up volunteer hours we would be happy to accommodate you. Again, please call the AFPA office.

Plans for the Annual Training and Awards Conference are underway as well. The theme of the conference this year is "All about Kids". Please watch for the registration form on our web page www.afpaonline.com. We look forward to seeing many of you in Jasper for the conference. As our conference is well received, please don't wait too long to register and book your hotel room at the Sawridge Hotel and Convention Centre in Jasper.

I will be attending the Canadian Foster Family Association's Annual Symposium being hosted by the Newfoundland and Labrador Foster Families Association in St. John's at the end of May. I look forward to meeting with the Executive Directors from across Canada to share what is happening in Alberta and to learn about all the exciting things happening throughout the country.

I am pleased to announce that the AFPA has been given a two year grant to build and pilot the Provincial Mentorship Program. We have hired co-coordinators who will begin work the beginning of June. Both ladies have Masters in Education and a wealth of experience to bring to the program. They will be visiting the various regions and holding focus groups within the next few months to get input from and make contact with both foster families and Human Services staff. I welcome both Kathy and Melissa to our team. I would like to thank Mark Hattori, ADM, Carole-Anne Patenaude, CEO Region 6 and Susan Parker, Analyst, Policy and Program Development for being on the selection committee for the Mentorship Program Coordinator as I know your time is extremely valuable. We appreciate all you do for the betterment of foster care.

The Alberta Foster Parent Association was extremely saddened by the sudden passing of Bryan Kelly, Senior Manager of Foster Care and Kinship Placements for Region 6. Our sympathy goes out to his family and his colleagues at this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Bryan was very committed to the betterment of foster care and worked diligently to make changes to improve the lives of children and families throughout Region 6 and the Province of Alberta. He will be missed and always remembered.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication to the AFPA. I truly respect the work they do as volunteers to serve the fostering community. I would also like to thank my staff for the work they do. It is a pleasure working with you. I am sure that 2012 – 2013 will be as successful as the previous year. Keep up the good work.

Have a wonderful fun-filled summer with your family!

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Sylvia Thompson

Wow it is hard to believe that summer is almost here. School will soon be over for another year. It makes me aware of how time flies and how quickly our children and grandchildren grow up. I hope everyone makes some special time this and every year for all of our children.

Planning for summer camp is coming along nicely. We could still use some volunteers in all areas e.g. kitchen, supervision, recreation, etc. If you have some time available between July 15 and July 29, please give some thought to helping out. We have been fortunate with a donation of new plastic barrels, and now look forward to having a dock on the pond.

Conference 2012 planning is in the final stages. We have a great line-up of sessions for participants to choose from, as well as great fun to be had on Friday evening. Set aside the first weekend in November and watch for the brochure to come out in late summer. Remember to get your registration in ASAP as registration is limited and every year we have to say no to some registrants.

The proposal and recommendations from the Transition to Adulthood Committee will soon be ready to present to the AFPA and the Ministry. More information will follow soon.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORTS

REGION 4 Diane Gunter

Region 4 FPC would like to extend a very special thank you to Heather Guard for the excellent job she has done representing us at the AFPA for many years. I am now doing this position as your Region 4 representative. My husband Geoff and I have been fostering since October 1990, eighteen years in Calgary and the past 4 in Delburne. We still have 2 of our foster children; they are now 22 and 19 and have Cerebral Palsy. We have recently decided to now just do Respite.

I am currently President of the RDFDA and Treasurer for R4 FPC. I am a First Responder for DFD and a Victim Services Advocate for the Three Hills RCMP Detachment. I am Chairperson for our Safe Family Committee-Domestic Violence.

The Olds Foster Parents Association had a very successful meeting on March 1st and are now meeting the first week of every month. It is wonderful to see them active again.

The Stettler Foster Parent Association has a new President and she is looking forward to getting more Foster Parents out and planning activities. RDFPA is planning their BBQ for the last Sunday in June. This year we are sending out registration forms to be sent back with a \$25.00 cheque. This cheque is returned to the registrant when they attend the BBQ.

Excitement is in the air as R4FPC plans for their annual retreat June 8th, 9th, and 10th at James River Camp. The theme this year is "Planting Seeds of Hope". The many planned sessions are quite diverse covering core training, supplemental training and personal interests, such as photography.

I look forward to doing this new position and learning more about how your Provincial Board works. Please feel free to call me with any questions or concerns you may have. I hope you all have a wonderful and safe summer, taking time to relax and enjoy your families.

REGION 5 Rene Rajotte

Our region was very dry with little snow over the winter months, so it has been great to see the late spring snow and the rain. Things are starting to turn green.

Our training conference was held in February and was very well attended. The evening banquet and fundraiser was a success. Thank you to all who took the time to organize the event.

We had a CEO meeting on April 17 with many issues brought forward. It created much discussion. We will be having our next regional meeting on September 18th in the Wainwright office. It will be an evening meeting from 7-8:30 to see if this will be more convenient than during the day. At this meeting we will be making the draw for a couple to go to the AFPA annual training conference in Jasper.

REGION 6 Linda Krauskopf

Region 6 had another successful conference this year. Everyone had a great time and the training was outstanding. We have already started talking about next year; it will be bigger and better. The conference will be for Foster Care, Kinship Care and Adoption families. We have also talked to the River Cree about next year. The feedback was that everyone loved the food and the location, so plan for next April's conference to be at the River Cree.

Regional Council has also started talking about the Citation Banquet and Caregiver Appreciation. The Citation Banquet will be at the River Cree on October 20th. Regional council is still meeting with Karen Morin to discuss concerns that Foster Parents are bringing forward from this Region, and from these meetings changes should start to be noticed.

Safe Babies is still in the works. The Mentorship Program should be starting soon as interviews have been completed and staff hired.

I will be in Newfoundland talking with Foster Parents from other provinces. We will be comparing notes, discussing things that are happening and where they are going in their province.

As a closing note, if you did not hear, the passing of Brian Kelly was on May 3rd. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and the Department.

ABORIGINAL CENTRAL Treaty 6 Peter Strikes with a Gun

My report will be based on my direct relation to First Nation Delegated Authorities. Aboriginal children entering the Child Welfare system continues to increase. First Nation elect need to assist and make positive changes to the poor parental model on the reserve and disclose result of findings in Social Services. Each month, here on welfare day it's chaotic and puts children at risk! This system has oppressed First Nation peoples and needs to be changed in an appropriate and positive manner.

Native parenting is a traditional value to empower our customs and beliefs needed for a healthy child. If they are to be our future, we as First Nations need to fully invest our knowledge and wisdom and lead by example.

My wife Jeannie and I are involved in sharing Nitsitaisini (Piikuni meaningful way of life) in high schools in Lethbridge, Livingstone as well as Outreach programs, Piikuni High School and youth treatment centres. We do this through video storytelling, demonstrations, drum making, singing, smudging, teepee lodges, sweat lodges and feather blessings. To graduate, First Nation needs to restore its heritage in more meaningful ways.

Foster parents had a gathering March 20th with a childcare worker to prioritize issues that would enhance the delivery of services to our children in the system.

We had a positive turn out on April 12, 2012 at the Foster Parent and Child Conference. We had respected traditional leadership who offered their knowledge and encouragement. This conference provided the welcomed opportunity to work with other Foster Parents within the Region.

We have received with honor a special invitation from the Government of Alberta and the Assistant Deputy Minister to take part in structuring social policy, strengthening relationships and addressing the root errors of aboriginal children coming into care. These meetings are being held in Lethbridge, Edmonton and Calgary.

My role is that of Treaty 7 Elder and that of the Director of Native South District with the Alberta Foster Parent Association. I am very hopeful and believe that we will succeed in making positive changes. I thank the Alberta Foster Parent Association for their dedication to the awareness of First Nation need for support regarding more foster homes on Native Reserves so our children will be able to grow up within their own communities, entrenched in their Native culture and values.

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Region 9

Region 9 is currently being serviced by FAST reps from out of Region. New reps from Region 9 are being recruited and will be trained as soon as possible!

Region 10

Region 10 is currently being serviced by FAST reps throughout the many other Regions.

kids these days ...

By Dr. David Rideout, CEO
North Central Alberta Child & Family Services Authority

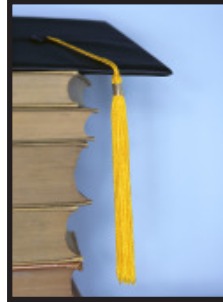
The Journey to Graduation

In a few short weeks, many young people all across Alberta will take the final step in a journey of a thousand miles: they'll be graduating from high school!

It's a journey that has taken them from crayons to computers, from bewilderment to understanding, and from uncertainty to confidence. That journey has brought them to one of the most important milestones in their lives so far, the achievement of a high school diploma.

But for some Alberta students the road to graduation is extremely difficult. For children and youth in provincial government care, the journey has often been fraught with obstacles like poverty, family violence, trauma and neglect. Small wonder that compared to other Alberta students, children and youth in care are less likely to complete high school or finish in the same length of time. Many of these vulnerable youth even risk dropping out of school and falling far short of their potential.

Over the past couple of years a concerted effort has been made to change that through a new initiative that aims to help these young people be successful in school. The project, called Success in School, is a partnership between the Ministries of Alberta Education and Human Services (formerly Children and Youth Services). It aligns quite well with



the Minister of Education's priority to increase broad-based supports for at-risk children and youth and improve high-school completion rates; it also aligns perfectly with the Minister of Human Services' focus on improving outcomes for children and youth in care.

The initiative will ensure that children and youth in care have a say in decisions that affect them and that they feel welcomed, valued, accepted, supported and respected in school. Teachers, social workers, school authorities, caregivers and other partners will work together in developing a school plan that reflects each student's particular needs, challenges, hopes, and aspirations. With all partners working together in a collaborative manner to support them, those young people will have greater opportunity than ever to be successful in their learning.

We are excited about this initiative and its potential to smooth the road to education for Alberta's most vulnerable children and youth. We know that success in school is the foundation for success in life, paving the way to higher education, career satisfaction, greater earning potential, and better quality of life. It is my sincere hope that each June when the newest contingent of graduates don their caps and gowns, no student is left behind.

Congratulations and best wishes to the Class of 2012!

50 Ideas for Old-Fashioned Summer Fun

The strongest memories we have often involve all of our senses; especially smell. In an age of computers, the Internet, DVDs and iPods, it is possible to imagine that our memories of bygone years will be undermined by too much time spent watching life instead of living it. Rediscover smells like fresh-squeezed lemonade and create new summer memories with this list of fifty ideas for old-fashioned summer fun!

While these ideas might seem child-centered, the truth is, they would make for fun summer activities for any age group. Just add more sophisticated food and beverages for more mature audiences!

1: Board games. Some classics to consider are Life, Clue, Battleship, Trivial Pursuit, and Backgammon. If you need more ideas, check out Board Game Central (boardgamecentral.com).

2: Card games. Games to try include Cribbage, Rummy, Poker and more. For an alphabetized list of card games and rules online go to the Card Games web site (www.pagat.com).

3: Jump rope. To make it more fun, try some jump rope rhymes. A comprehensive list with variations is at Games Kids Play (www.gameskidsplay.net).

4: Kite flying. Kites are fun to make and fly and might be one of the best ways to spend a summer day that is a bit too cold and windy for swimming.

5: Build sand castles. This is both a tactile and imaginative activity that is also a lesson in tides and the transitory nature of life (bring a camera to capture the glory!).

6: Make root beer floats. Some say you should put the ice cream in first while others say that it is best to put in the ice cream after the root beer - sounds like a good home experiment!

7: Homemade ice cream. You can use an old hand crank machine or you can substitute two coffee cans if you haven't got an ice cream maker of any sort.

8: Popsicles. Buy them or make your own. Delicious either way!

9: Building forts. Build forts out of blankets, cardboard boxes, whatever is on hand!

10: Have tea parties. These can be imaginary or real and might involve china or paper cups; it doesn't matter as long as you have fun. Especially good with homemade lemonade (#23)!

11: Grow a garden teepee. I have always thought this looked like great fun! Ask your local nursery or home building supplies store for tips and how to guides. Or search online for a number of instructions and plant ideas (you can use pole beans, moonflower, cucumbers or morning glory).

12: Gardening in general. Not only does gardening involve sight, smell, taste (if you grow edible things), touch and sound (gardens are filled with distinct sounds) but it thrives on getting dirty! Even if you don't have a plot of land at your disposal, try container gardening or look into renting a spot at a community garden.

13: Fruit picking. Strawberries, cherries, peaches, blueberries, oh my! For information on what to do with your harvest (canning tips) and links to a statelist to help you locate a pick-your-own fruit farm near you visit the Pick Your Own web site (www.pickyourown.org)

14: Swimming. There is always the local pool or favourite lake.

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CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Foster parents may require resources to provide child care to attend appointments, respond to personal commitments, take breaks from the day-to-day demands of parenting or to support a child's needs. Policy was revised in October 2011 to consider a spectrum of child care arrangements to offer more options based on the reason for the care, the duration of the care and the safety checks required.

Babysitting

Babysitting is short-term care that doesn't involve overnight care and most often occurs in a foster home. Foster parents may hire babysitters at their discretion for up to 12 hours on any one occasion, keeping in consideration the maturity, skill level and experience of the babysitter as well as the number and special needs of the children in the home. The babysitter must be able to reach the foster parents in the event of an emergency. Babysitting will be reimbursed as per the Foster Care Rate Schedule if it is required for mandatory training or other fostering business. In other situations, foster parents compensate the babysitter.

Relief Care

Relief care is overnight, weekend or a week at a time care when the foster parent is away for an extended period of time. Relief care may occur in the foster parent's home or in the home of the relief care provider. An Intervention Record Check is required for the relief care provider as well as any additional information requested by the caseworker. Foster parents must provide the name, address and contact information of the relief care provider, the dates the child will be cared for by a relief care provider, and the names of any other persons in the relief caregiver's home to the caseworker and foster care worker. Relief care will be reimbursed as per Foster Care Rate Schedule if it is for mandatory foster parent training or other fostering business. If there are exceptional circumstances of the home, relief may be included in and reimbursed through a Foster Care Support Plan. In other situations, foster parents compensate the relief care provider.

Child Seat Recall

Child-safety-seat manufacturer Dorel Juvenile Group is recalling 1,737 Comfy Carry and OnBoard35 infant-safety rear-facing seats.

The seats were sold without the seat base which is mandatory to meet federal safety standard requirements.

The affected models are: Comfy Carry: IC123FSM and OnBoard 35: IC124FSM.

Customers can call Dorel at (877) 416-8111

Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,

or contact the company at infantlatchrecall@djgusa.com



Respite Care

Respite care is provided to foster parents caring for children with complex needs or for exceptional circumstances of a foster parent. The duration of care will be outlined in a Foster Care Support Plan. Respite must be provided out of the foster parent's home by licensed foster parents or residential facilities. Foster parents must provide the caseworker's contact information to the respite care provider for emergency use, in addition to the foster parent's contact information. Respite is reimbursed through a Foster Care Support Plan.

Alternate Child Care

Foster parents who work out of the home or attend school may have alternate child care providers who provide care on a regular and ongoing basis and relate to the child in a parenting capacity. The foster care worker will conduct a face to face interview and request a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search and an Intervention Record Check in order to assess the suitability of the alternate care provider. Foster parents must provide their contact information and the caseworker's contact information to the alternate care provider for emergency use. Foster parents compensate the alternate child care provider.

Annual Aboriginal Awareness Weekend August 24, 25, 26, 2012



Tansi everyone!!! We are looking forward to a great new weekend of Aboriginal Training.

We have a lot of new people involved and offering a lot of different things this year. We are planning to offer some core and supplemental training to those who attend. By combining these two training areas we hope to have a more complete weekend.

Weather permitting, we would love to have a sweat lodge. We have a new tee pee rising with new poles. A new group will be there to help with different crafts, pipe ceremony and storytelling ... just to name a few of the wonderful activities to take place. We will also be offering courses just for men and some for women.

We changed the weekend for this event to August 24, 25th and 26th so that we are not competing with the river being too high and having too much rain.



Keep your eye on our website for more information and course registration. We are looking forward to having a great weekend. See you all there.

Please contact the AFPA to reserve your spot in this great weekend!!!

AFPA Brownell Children's Retreat 2012 Camp Dates

We invite you to join in on our fifth children's summer camp located at the AFPA Brownell Children's Retreat near Sundre, Alberta. Your children will have fun, learn a lot, and make some new friends. Registration begins immediately, so send your application to us as soon as possible.

Leaders Training Weekend: July 13-15

Camp #1: Wee, Wet and Wild.

July 15-20 Ages: 6, 7, 8, 9

For our sibling camp, your children will be between the ages of 6 to 10 to attend. The cost is \$175 per child for a 5 day camp. This is a fun filled camp with lots of activities! Your kids will be playing games, sports activities, swimming, boating, or crafts. They may also be just chilling out with their friends. In the evening, your kids might enjoy a marshmallow around the campfire, or listen to a leader tell a story. We will even have a fireworks display at the end of camp. Your kids will love it! It's crazy fun, with a relaxed atmosphere.



Your children will be well supervised and cared for. If you, their parent, would like to come and join the fun, you can come and volunteer for the week. Then you can enjoy camp, and your child can come for the week for only \$75.00.

Camp #2: Adventure Camp

July 22-29 Ages: 10, 11, 12, 13

For our outdoor adventure camp, your children will be between the ages of 10 to 13 to attend. The cost to attend is \$245 per child for 7 day camp. Our Adventure Camp is filled with lots of activities! Your kids will be playing games, sports activities, swimming, boating, or crafts. They will not only have fun, but they will learn a lot about the outdoors, sports activities, and they will even learn how to paddle a canoe! Adventure Camp is all about learning new things, meeting new friends, and just hanging out! We will even have a fireworks display at the end of camp.

Your children will be well supervised and cared for. If you the parent would like to join the fun, you can come and volunteer for the week. Then you can enjoy camp, and your child can come for the week for only \$125.00.

Please register your child by June 30, 2012 by visiting our web site at www.afpaonline.com for the registration package.



Seasonal Allergies (Hay Fever)



About Seasonal Allergies

"Ah-choo!" It's the third time this morning that your son has had a sneezing fit, and as you hand him another tissue you wonder if these cold-like symptoms — the sneezing, the congestion, and runny nose — have anything to do with the recent weather change. Well, if he gets similar symptoms at the same time every year, chances are you're right: He's probably got seasonal allergies.

Seasonal allergies, sometimes called "hay fever" or seasonal allergic rhinitis, are allergy symptoms that occur during certain times of the year, usually when outdoor molds release their spores or trees, grasses, and weeds release tiny pollen particles into the air to fertilize other plants.

The immune systems of people who are allergic to mold spores or pollen treat these particles (called allergens) as invaders and release chemicals, including histamine, into the bloodstream to defend against them. It's the release of these chemicals that causes allergy symptoms.

People can be allergic to one or more types of pollen or mold. The type someone is allergic to determines when symptoms will occur. For example, in the mid-Atlantic states, tree pollination begins in February and lasts through May, grass from May through June, and weeds from August through October — thus, kids with these allergies are likely to have increased symptoms during those times of the year. Mold spores tend to peak midsummer through the fall, depending on location.

If your child has never had seasonal allergies in years past, it's possible that they're just beginning. Seasonal allergies can start at almost any time, but they usually develop by 10 years of age and reach their peak in the early twenties, with symptoms often disappearing later in adulthood.

Signs and Symptoms

If your child develops a "cold" at the same time every year, seasonal allergies might be to blame. Allergy symptoms, which usually come on suddenly and last as long as a person is exposed to a particular allergen, can include:

- Sneezing
- itchy nose and/or throat
- nasal congestion
- clear, runny nose
- coughing

These symptoms are often accompanied by itchy, watery, and/or red eyes, which is called allergic conjunctivitis. If your child develops wheezing and shortness of breath in addition to these symptoms, the allergy may have progressed into asthma.

Diagnosis

Seasonal allergies are fairly easy to identify because the pattern of symptoms returns from year to year following exposure to an allergen.

Talk with your doctor if you think your child might have allergies. The doctor will ask about symptoms and when they appear and, based on the answers and a physical exam, should be able to make a diagnosis. If not, the doctor may refer you to an allergist for blood or allergy skin tests.

To determine an allergy's cause, allergists usually do skin tests in one of two ways:

1. A drop of a purified liquid form of the allergen is dropped onto the skin and the area is pricked with a small pricking device.
2. A small amount of allergen is injected just under the skin. This test stings a little but isn't extremely painful. After about 15 minutes, if a lump surrounded by a reddish area appears (like a mosquito bite) at the injection site, the test is positive.

Even if a skin test or a blood test shows an allergy, a child must also have symptoms to be definitively diagnosed with an allergy. For example, a child who has a positive test for grass pollen and sneezes frequently while playing in the grass would be considered allergic to grass pollen.

Treatment

There is no real cure for seasonal allergies, but it is possible to relieve symptoms. Start by reducing or eliminating exposure to allergens. During allergy season, keep windows closed, use air conditioning if possible, and stay indoors when pollen counts are high.

Have your child wash hands or shower and change clothing after playing outside. And don't allow a child with seasonal allergies to mow the lawn (this tends to kick up pollen and mold spores).

If reducing exposure isn't possible or is ineffective, medicines can help ease allergy symptoms. They may include decongestants, antihistamines, and nasal spray steroids. If symptoms cannot be managed with medicines, the doctor may recommend taking your child to an allergist or immunologist for regular allergy shots (immunotherapy), which can help desensitize kids to allergens.

Reviewed by: Mary L. Gavin, MD
Date reviewed: April 2010
From: www.kidshealth.org



50 Ideas for Old-Fashioned Summer Fun

- Continued from Page 6

15: Riding bikes. It's good for the earth and good for your heart! And who doesn't remember summers defined by "riding bikes"? Make sure to do a maintenance check on your bike at the beginning of each season and remember that riding with a helmet is the safest way to ride. If you ride at night, invest in lights that you can attach to your bike, yourself or your backpack.



16: Backyard camping. Buy s'mores supplies, drag out the sleeping bags and flashlights and enjoy a night under the stars.

17: Scavenger hunt. You might hunt for things found in nature, things found at the pool or beach, things in a thrift store, be creative and have fun!

18: Play badminton. Or volleyball or tennis or any other game with a net - badminton is especially good for BBQs and picnics (#33).

19: Play marbles. There are many games to play with marbles. For rules see the Traditional Scouting web site (www.inquiry.net).

20: Make play dough. There is traditional and gluten free, colored and un-colored but my favorite will always be peanut butter (know who might be allergic to nuts or peanuts before trying peanut butter play dough!)

21: Build a birdhouse. Or at least try. I don't know many people that finish this project that start it as a kid but its worth a go.

22: Visit a museum. If you need help locating a museum near you or you are looking for a specific type of museum, see the USA Museums Database online (www.museumca.org/usa/).

23: Make lemonade. Cool, refreshing and so much better than anything you can buy in the store.

24: Go fishing. Fishing is timeless. As long as there are fish, there will be fishing. Not everyone's cup of tea but if you like water, being on a boat or on shore, being quiet or whispering with friends, this might be worth trying. Remember that fishing comes in many varieties: lake fishing, shore fishing, fly-fishing, sea fishing and the list goes on. Ask for help at a local sports store or better yet a local tackle shop for regulations on fishing in your area and help with getting started.

25: Tie-dye. This is a great summer activity because dying is a messy process and there is something fun about sitting in the grass and cutting rubber bands off of t-shirts to reveal their inner tie-dyed beauty.

26: Play croquet. Or try other lawn games like bocce ball or horseshoes.

27: Stage a play. You might find one you like online or at the library stage it as is, or you might adapt it or try writing your own. If you need inspiration, watch *Finding Neverland*.

28: Sit on a porch or porch swing. Outdoor summer places are very special indeed. A porch swing or swing under a grape arbor, the steps on a front stoop, a rocking chair

on a screened porch - creating a summer space outside that is a place for a few family and friends to meet and stay cool is as old fashioned as it gets.

29: Create a dress-up trunk. Go to a thrift store, buy an old suitcase and some fun, funky clothes and hats and let the fun begin.

30: Listen to live music. If you are interested in classical music find info on local orchestras at Meet the Music (www.meetthemusic.org) or check your local papers and online for other musical events on offer.

31: Go sailing. This is not limited to people on the coast! Try sailing on a lake with a wind sail or sunfish.

32: Make candles. The easiest may be the roll-up beeswax candles but the possibilities are endless.

33: Go for a picnic. Pack the perfect old-fashioned picnic; take the bug spray and head to one of your favorite picnic spots! You might combine this activity with building sand castles (#5), kite flying (#3), going hiking (#36) or listening to live music (#30).

34: Visit a farm. This can be especially fun to do when baby animals are born or still quite young.

35: Go to a fair. Every state has a fair. To find information on one in your state or one near you, check out the online State Fair Directory (www.ncstatefair.com/).

36: Go Hiking. Wear comfortable shoes, take plenty of water, a basic first aid kit, rain gear and some healthy, energy filled snacks. Also, tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back because your cell phone might not work out on the trail.

37: Make puppets. Sock puppets, finger puppets, Popsicle-stick puppets and paper bag puppets are popular choices. You might stage a play (# 27) with your puppets!

38: Have a watermelon seed-spitting contest. There might even be an official competition at the fair (#35)!

39: Play Charades. A classic and one that the whole family usually enjoys.

40: Draw with sidewalk chalk. While you are at it, you might try playing hopscotch (#50)!

41: Skip stones. Everyone enjoys life's simple pleasures.

42: Go to summer festivals. Check online or in the local paper for festivals dedicated to your town, strawberries, your town founder or ice cream: summer is a time of celebration!

43: Go dancing. You might dance at the fair (#35) or a festival (#42), or while listening to live music (#30), or in a meadow, or your own backyard!

44: Read a book. Many libraries and bookstores offer summer reading lists, or ask your child's teacher, your friends or search online for recommendations.

45: Do puzzles. Try jigsaw puzzles or a traditional riddle.

46: Go on a butterfly / firefly hunt. It might be tempting to catch them in a jar but remember that if you do, they will surely die much sooner than if you just enjoy them in their natural habitat.

47: Go to the drive in movies. Not sure where one is near you? Check Drive in Theater online (www.driveintheater.com).

48: Play catch. With baseballs, beanbags or water balloons. Or play keep-away if there are three people!

49: Throw a Frisbee. Or try other disc games like Frisbee-golf or ultimate Frisbee.

50: Play hopscotch. Or if you have a ball, play four square.



From: <http://voices.yahoo.com/50-ideas-old-fashioned-summer-fun-392076.html?cat=25>

5 Ways to Celebrate the End of the School Year

Make the last few weeks before school lets out a fun, fantastic time for you and your child with these five smile-inducing ideas.

- 1. Countdown Calendar:** Make a big calendar to hang on the wall for the last month of school. Have your child write down things she wants to do when school is over and then add some of those very things into the calendar and show her that school days and fun days don't have to be separate.
- 2. Now and Then:** Spend time noticing changes and accomplishments with your child. Is he taller? Stronger? What and who does he know now that he didn't when school began? What does he predict for next year? Write down his answers and make it an annual tradition.
- 3. Summer School Supplies:** Why not replace and freshen up arts and crafts and other school supplies at the end of the year? A fresh box of crayons or brand-new fancy notebook will do wonders to keep your little one reading and writing all summer. Plus it's a great reward for a year of hard work.
- 4. Best in Show:** Have a party before school ends and have the children create unusual ribbons and rewards for each other (and even themselves!) like "Best smelling knees," "Most improved jump-roper," "King of Cartwheels," or "#1 Kazooist." Take the focus off grades and celebrate individuality.
- 5. Going Places:** Take your child on a fun trip to celebrate how far she's come. You can try something unusual like going out for high tea, something with a take-away souvenir like a paint-your-own-pottery place, or just go for pure fun with a day at an amusement park.



From: <http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/5-ways-to-celebrate-the-end-of-the-school-year/>



Does Your Child Have a Disability?
Our One-Stop Information Centre Will Have What Your Family Needs!

Check out this website

... with links for Calgary, Edmonton, and Red Deer!

It contains links for Parents, Teachers and Kids that are definitely worth exploring!

<http://www.special-kidz-canada.com/index.html>

Programs & Services

The LDAA-CC strives to offer programs that help people with learning disabilities reach their personal potential.

Social Skills Programs Level I and II

Our social skills program teaches children practical strategies, such as problem solving, cooperation and conflict resolution. Children will develop appropriate social skills through a multi-level program. Our social skills programs are run in partnership with Estelle Siebens Community Services associated with Foothills Academy.

Real Life Social Skills for Teens

Our Real Life Social Skills for Teens offer teens an opportunity to practice social skills in real life situations.

Camp Amicus Residential Camp

The Amicus programs offer a structured, supportive program for children and teens with learning disabilities. Our summer camps offer a unique outdoor adventure, where kids can swim, do horseback riding, and many other outdoor activities, while improving their social and communication skills.

Camp Amicus Day Camp

Camp Amicus Day camps are Monday to Friday for two week periods and are for children with learning disabilities and/or ADHD. The camp focuses on teaching and reinforcing social skills in a fun and safe environment. Camp goals are to increase the campers' self esteem, make friends, learn social skills, have a ton of fun and make lasting friendships!

Athletic Coordination Camp

The Athletic Coordination Camp will focus on improving fine and gross motor coordination and team building skills. Campers will participate in activities such as soccer, baseball, track and field, strength training, arts & crafts, swimming and many other activities to increase their knowledge of individual and team sports and to increase muscle tone and self confidence. The LDAA-CC's Athletic Coordination Camp features a 4:1 camper to counsellor ratio.

Parent & Educator Workshops

Parents often have many questions on the best way to support their kids with learning disabilities. Our parent workshops offer practical skills and information, such as Managing a Hyperactive Child, Disability Tax Credit or Assistive Technology workshops. Come and meet other parents and get practical tips and insight on issues relevant to learning disabilities.

LD and ADHD Adult Directions Group

Are you an adult with a learning disability or AD/HD and struggling to find support? Do you feel like no one else understands what it's like to have learning issues? This group is facilitated by a registered psychologist and will cover a variety of topics which will include self-esteem, communication skills, priority setting, time management and stress management.

Info & Resources

If you have any questions on learning disabilities or ADHD, please call (403) 283-6606 or email a request for information to info@LDAA.net.

Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta Edmonton Chapter

Beyond Words Summer Day Camp for GRADES 6 to 12

July 16 – 20 and August 24 (a day to show what you know!)

Beyond Words Summer Day Camp is structured for adolescents (Grades 6-12) who are struggling at keeping friends and interacting with their peers.

This camp offers direct social skills promoting and teaching confidence in:

- Conversations
- Friendships
- Phone skills
- How to read nonverbal cues.

Adolescents with Learning Disabilities and AD/HD are all welcome.

Participants will learn social skills in a safe setting in the morning and then practice what they have learned out in the community in the afternoon.

Outings can include: riding Edmonton Transit, swimming, bowling, golfing and other activities that the group may choose to try.

Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm ***Before Camp Care: 8:00 am**

Cost: \$300 for Members \$350 for Non-members

***Subsidies may be available. Contact the office for more info.**

Contact the office at 780-466-1011 or programs@ldedmonton.ca for more information or to register.

Fall Child Social Skills Program

Children who have Learning Disabilities often have difficulty with social interaction at school and at home. Difficulties with social interaction can cause a child to feel lonely and depressed, which then impacts their performance academically, and can continue to impact their relationships with others.

A collaborative program between LDEdmonton and Corinne Eckert Child & Adolescent Psychology offers a 10 week social skills program for children 8-12 years old.

In this program, children will learn how to make and keep friends by learning and practicing:

- What makes a good friend and how to be a good friend
- Listening Skills
- Reading Feelings
- Having a Conversation
- Questions and Compliments
- Problem Solving
- Strong Emotions (anger and anxiety)
- Put Downs and Teasing



Date: TBA

Time: 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Cost: \$ 525.00 (This program may be covered by your medical benefits. Please contact your medical benefits provider for more information.) Subsidies may also be available. Please contact the office (780-466-1011) for more information.

Contact the office at 780-466-1011 or programs@ldedmonton.ca for more information or to register.

SAFE BABIES

Alberta is in the process of adapting a British Columbia program to provide specialized training and supports for foster parents who care for infants who have been prenatally exposed to substances. The BC Safe Babies Program was originally developed through joint health and social services partnerships and began as a pilot project in 1997 in Victoria, BC. It has been adapted to communities across BC and is based on the principles of community development and having foster parents as integral partners in the planning and delivery of the program. Alberta has received permission to use and modify the program to suit the service delivery structure and needs in this province.

A working committee is meeting to further the development of a Safe Babies program in Alberta. This committee includes foster parents and representatives from the AFPA, the Alberta Association of Services to Children and Families (AASCF), Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health and Human Services (CFSA, DFNA and Ministry).



Susan Patenaude, the Provincial Coordinator for the Alberta Network for Safe and Healthy Children, has been hired as a short-term project coordinator. Susan will be assisting with the development of Alberta training materials and supporting the plan to pilot the training in two sites. More information will be provided as we move forward with this exciting project.

Board Reports

- Continued from Page 4

REGION 8

Mary Legeyt

Spring is finally here! Everyone is busy with clean-ups, lambing, calving and fieldwork. Summer Camp forms are all out and the Aboriginal Picnic for Sturgeon Lake is planned for June 28th. Each office is planning picnics for the early part of June. Aboriginal Days in Grande Prairie is the 3rd Sunday in June. Other band events will be taking place in June.

Plans are underway for our fall conference, from November 16-18 at the Holiday Inn, Grande Prairie. AFPA's Conference is in Jasper the first week of November. Anyone wanting to attend, please contact your worker.

Drum building for kids in care will start on June 1st at the Grande Prairie office and June 2nd at the Dungeon Historical Site. Anyone wanting to attend please contact Sara Foley or myself. Other parts of the Region will be having drum building in the Fall. Forms are out for Foster Parent and Social Worker of the Year. Our selections will be made at our Regional June meeting in Peace River.

I won West Jet tickets at the AFPA conference in November and wondered where we would be going. Well Jim, our daughter and I leave for Newfoundland for three weeks on June 4th. I will let you know more when we return.

Added reasons to join the AFPA:

Special pricing is available to AFPA Members at The Brick, Hughes Car Wash and Gas Diesel Bar, and West Edmonton Mall (Choice Passes), SilverBirch Hotels and Resorts, Chateau Louis Edmonton, AVIS Car Rentals, Canar Rock Products Edmonton and Red Deer, Minute Muffler & Break Calgary, and Koch Ford Edmonton

<h2 style="margin: 0;">MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">January 1, 2012 -December 31, 2012</p>		 <p style="margin: 0;">ALBERTA FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION</p>
<p>NAME _____</p> <p>NAME _____</p> <p>ADDRESS _____</p> <p>CITY _____ PROVINCE _____</p> <p>POSTAL CODE _____</p> <p>TELEPHONE _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p>	<p>PLEASE MARK X IN THE APPROPRIATE BOX</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NEW</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> RENEW</p> <p>INDICATE CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP WITH X IN THE CORRECT BOX</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DEPARTMENT FOSTER HOME Regional Authority Name _____ Regional Authority Number _____ Classification _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> AGENCY FOSTER HOME Name of Agency _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ASSOCIATE MEMBER</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> LIFETIME MEMBER</p> <p>Method of Payment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD <input type="checkbox"/> VISA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CASH <input type="checkbox"/> CHEQUE</p>	
<p>PLEASE COMPLETE ALL AREAS TO ENSURE ACCURATE INFORMATION TYPE OR PRINT</p> <p>RETURN FORM AND MEMBERSHIP FEE TO:</p> <p style="color: #e91e63;">Alberta Foster Parent Association 9750 - 35 Avenue Edmonton, Alberta T6E 6J6 Local phone (780) 429-9923 Phone: 1-800-667-2372 -Provincial Fax: (780) 426-7151</p>		<p>Credit Card Number _____</p> <p>Authorized Signature _____</p> <p>Expiry Date _____</p>

CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Foster Home Member: an individual who licensed by the Alberta Human Services or equivalent
2. Associate Member: an individual or agency that is not a licensed foster parent
3. Lifetime Member: appointed lifetime members of the AFPA (fee waived)

The membership fee is \$50.00 per household per year (one card for each parent will be issued). A fee of \$10.00 will be charged for all NSF cheques. If you would like your membership card laminated, please enclose an additional \$0.75 per card.



CANADIAN FOSTER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Donor Membership Application
April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013

- New Member: Renewal:
- Foster Family: Social Worker: Other:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Prov./Terr: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax/Email: _____

Family Membership Fee: \$20.00 or \$100.00 for 6 years:

Method of payment:

Cheque: Money Order:

A Receipt for Income Tax Purposes Will Be Issued
- Revenue Canada #137467726 RR0001

Mail this form and membership fee to:

CANADIAN FOSTER FAMILY ASSOCIATION
c/o Sharon Joyal
Membership Chair
Box 1 Group 25 RR2
Ste Anne, Manitoba R5H 1R2