



Newsletter

Preschool, Daycare, ASC

650 Carter Road, Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G2 (604) 947-9626

www.bowenchildrenscentre.ca

January 2012

Important Message To All

Happy New Year to all Bowen Children's Centre's families! We certainly hope that 2012 is a year filled with fun, joy and learning for all the children attending BCC's programs.

It saddens me that I must start the year by telling you all that in late November of 2011, we received word from our local MLA, Joan McIntyre, that BCC would receive *only* \$10,000 in Direct Access Gaming funds this year - down from a historic level of \$27,000.

After much researching, emailing and time on the telephone, *here is what we know to date:*

The Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch of the provincial government has reclassified daycares and preschools into a division called "Community Education" and has made a policy decision to fund us all at "approximately 50% of historic levels". While this decision was effective in March 2010, no one was officially notified and because the government made a "top up" last year we were paid the \$27,000 as usual, and this made the change invisible to us.

The \$17,000 may or may not be returned this year. The word from the Gaming Branch is that they are waiting for recommendations from the Gaming Review Report that was completed this fall by Skip Triplet, a former president of Kwantlen College, who was hired to examine the role of government in allocating gaming revenue.

A funding shortfall of \$17,000 will hit BCC hard, not to mention the impact

this decision will have on all preschools and daycares in BC who typically rely on Gaming funding. This \$17,000 is already included in our 2011/12 break-even budget and, if it is not returned by government, our options are to:

- fundraise an additional \$17,000
- increase the fees in our programs
- a combination of these two options

None of the above options are easy for us and additional fundraising will be especially complicated by the fact that Bowen Island is a small community, with a limited population, and all the non-profits competing for limited charity revenue.

I have been in touch with all the groups - professional and political - that work for and with child care organizations in BC, and they are all devastated by this news which is a blow to the early childhood sector.

What you can do right now to help:

1) Please sign the letter to BC Premier Christy Clark, cc'd to local MLA Joan McIntyre, Shirley Bond (the Minister of Public Safety and the Solicitor General), Douglas Scott (Assistant Deputy Minister) and Ursula Cowland (Executive Director, Licensing and Grants Division) that expresses our disappointment in this decision and our request to overturn this policy. Please add your names in support of this letter by Wednesday, January 11th. There is a copy located in the cubby area at BCC, and another at the After School Club at BICS.

2) Please contact our MLA, Joan McIntyre, our voice in the legislature, and let her know that you are not happy with this decision and request that she work hard to:

- a) Obtain "top-up" for this year and
- b) overturn this new funding policy and return funding to historic levels.

Contact information:

joan.mcintyre.mla@leg.bc.ca or at 604-981-0045.

Before contacting anyone, please become informed by reading the "What's happening in Early Childhood in B.C." bulletin board in the cubby area at BCC. There are articles to review as well as the letter to Christy Clark on this board. I am also available to discuss these issues with you.

While this is devastating news to me and the BCC Board, let me assure you that we are determined that this will NOT affect the quality of the programming that you have come to count on at BCC and, with your help, we will do everything in our power to advocate for the return of this necessary funding.

Ann Silberman, Executive Director and the BCC Board of Directors

Dates to remember for January to June 2012

March 12th - 16th Preschool Spring Break - Daycare remains open

March 12th - March 25th ASC Spring Break

April 6th and April 9th - BCC closed for Good Friday and Easter Monday

May 21st - BCC closed for Victoria Day

June 22nd - last day of Preschool

June 28th - last day for ASC



**HAPPY NEW YEAR
FOR EVERYONE!!!**

What's happening:

December was a month filled with excitement and joy. We are very privileged to have a community full of wonderful people who came to the preschool to share their background and culture with the children. A big thank you goes out to "Santa Claus", "Mikulas", and to Avria and Leonardo who shared the excitement of lighting the Menorah with all of us.



The children worked very hard at decorating the classroom for the evening concerts and in practicing their songs. We are all very proud of them and hope

PreSchool

Preschool Teacher's Cell

604-317-1761

Class Reps

M/W/F am:

Amelia Smolar (604-947-0822)

M/W/F pm:

Carrie Thiel (604-809-9284)

T/Th:

Rachel Phillips (778-322-4961)

you all enjoyed this magical time as much as we did. They also had the opportunity to go on a walk to the "Knick Knack Nook" This gave the children an excellent opportunity to experience giving something treasured away. The staff at the Knick Knack Nook was very appreciative of all the items

they got and took the time to thank each and everyone for their donations. Many thanks go to all parents who helped with this activity.



Safe Spaces

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the staff at BCC took part in the first half of the Safe Spaces workshop. This program was developed by Westcoast Child Care Resource centre, and it was designed to address anti-bias, anti-racism, and anti-bullying issues among young children. Safe Spaces has been designed to meet the particular developmental needs of children who are 2 ½-5 years of age. The Safe Spaces approach to bullying prevention includes all children participating in early childhood programs, not only those who exhibit behaviours of concerns. As we begin the new year, we will be implementing the first of four modules, SAFE/NOT-SAFE, in our preschool classroom, and the children will become aware of safe and not safe behaviours, They will learn to recognize those behaviours



that are helpful, friendly and safe, how they feel in different situations, as well as how our behaviour makes others feel. If you would like to find out more about this program, there are instructional videos available to all families at the centre, which can be loaned and watched at home at your own convenience. We only ask that you return it as quickly as you can so other families can have the same opportunity and take a bag of popcorn with you to enjoy while watching!



Dress for the weather

We are now in the heart of the winter weather. Please be thoughtful about your children's outdoor clothing. Our class schedule always includes a little time to play outside in the playground or to go out for a walk through the trails. Please ensure your child has warm winter boots, mittens, hat and a warm winter coat, as well as rain or snow pants if needed. "A warm adventurer is a happy adventurer".



Dates to remember from January to June 2012

January 25 – Library field trip

March 12th – 16th Preschool
Spring Break

April 6th and April 9th – BCC
closed for Good Friday and
Easter Monday

May 21st - BCC closed for
Victoria Day

June 22nd - last day of
Preschool

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The Start of the Safe Spaces Program at BCC

This fall the BCC staff received training in the Safe Spaces Program, an anti-bias curriculum aimed specifically for young children. This is a crucial time in the life of the young child to learn empathy, tools for dealing with their emotions, self-esteem, and pro-social behaviour. It is important for families to learn a bit about the program as we can then all work together in its implementation.

A “safe space” is one that we are all entitled to, and the lessons learned through this program will promote lifelong positive social skills and behaviour. The wonderful thing about this program is that it assists teachers and caregivers alike with easy to use language and guidelines. Together we must implement the Safe Spaces rules in order to ensure that everyone feels safe and secure in their surroundings.

Community Daycare

Daycare #
604-947-9628
BCC Office: 604-947-9626

The four Rules of Safe Spaces are:

***My body is safe** – No one hits, kicks, pushes or tries to hurt my body.

***My feelings are safe** – No one intentionally tries to hurt my feelings saying mean things, calling me names, or laughing at me.

***My work is safe** – No one damages what I am working with.

The Safe Spaces Key Vocabulary:

- safe / not safe
- friendly / not friendly
- fair / not fair
- happy, sad, angry, afraid

Please start to incorporate this language at home and you may start to notice your child using it too!

Baby Gallery

We will be creating a display of photos as one of our Safe Spaces projects. Please send in a baby photo and recent photo of your child to add. This display aims to show the children how small and

fragile they all once were, and to instil feelings of compassion and empathy for one another.

The “Big Kids” Visit BCC

The children and staff of BCC enjoyed a visit from neighbouring *Island Pacific School* students who volunteered one afternoon of their time. The students were a great help in completing maintenance work, cleaning tasks, and of course....playing with the kids!



Winter Celebration

Thank you to all families who attended the daycare Winter Celebration. The turnout was much more than we expected and the children showed their bravery by singing in front of the large audience. The children did a fabulous job preparing for the event by baking cookies, practicing songs, and decorating the classroom and tree.

BCC in the Bowfest Parade



Safe Spaces Training for Bowen Childcare Providers



Baking



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011

Said the Whale Perform at BCC



Gardening and Harvesting



Nature Walks



Firefighters Visit BCC



Dates to Remember

Dates to remember for January to June 2012

January 20th - no ASC
as BICS closed for
professional day

January 24th - field trip
to the library

March 12th – 16th
Preschool Spring Break
- Daycare remains open

March 12th – March
25th ASC Spring Break

April 6th and April 9th –
BCC closed for Good
Friday and Easter
Monday

May 21st - BCC closed
for Victoria Day

June 22nd - last day of
Preschool

June 28th - last day for
ASC

Welcome back, Happy New
Year, we hope everyone had
a restful and safe holiday.
Bonita and I are ready to get
back into action!!



The After School Club (ASC)

After School Club Cell
604-908-6056

December...

The highlight of the ASC in
December was the field trip
down to the Festival of
Trees. The children were so
proud of their decorations
and setting up the tree. We
went to the Snug for hot
chocolate afterwards and the
children had a blast!



Thank you to Marli's parents,
Marcus and Billi Behm and
to Caleb's parents, Geoff
and Laura Brokaw who
accompanied the children
and staff on the trip.



Field Trips 2012

The field trip to the Festival
of Trees made us realize
that field trips on Bowen
could be a possibility and a
lot of fun! We have decided
to ramp up and do a field trip
each month. January's field
trip will be to the Bowen
Island library and then out
for (you guessed it, hot
chocolate!)

*This field trip will take
place on January 24th,
leaving BICS at 3:45 pm
and returning at
approximately 5:00 pm.
**Permission form to
enable your child to go
on the trip and forms
to enable your child to
take out a library card
are at the ASC for you.**
Please speak to Sharon
and/or Bonita. If your
child attends the ASC on
Tuesdays and already
has a library card,
please send it along so
he/she can take out a
book on the trip.*

Programming 2012

Sharon and Bonita have grand plans for programming for 2012 – look out for the cooking program starting this month, new flashlights to help entice your youngsters outside in the grey afternoons and more field trips around Bowen!



We are also thinking of having a music teacher one day/week to do some musical interludes with the children... so keep tuned for the music program starting in February. When we have special events on a regular basis, we will try to do a different day each week so that all the children attending the ASC get an opportunity to participate.



Please remember that Bonita and Sharon are always available to discuss anything you want us to know in regards to your child, the program, etc. Just give us a heads up and one of us can step away from the program for a bit to accommodate you. We are also interested in your feedback and suggestions – anything that will improve our service to you and your children is always welcome!