

EASTERN SHORE FAMILY RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

Supporting children, youth, families and communities

Mailing Address
PO Box 53
Porters Lake, NS
B3E 1M1



Civic Address
5228 Hwy 7, Suite 203
Porters Lake Shopping Centre
B3E 1J8

Phone: 902-827-1461

Toll Free: 1-866-847-1461

Fax: 902-827-1464

Email: esfamilyresource@ns.aliantzinc.ca

Website: www.esfamily.org



Our Staff

Nancy Hollis

Executive Director

Leslie Hauck

Family Life Educator

Tracy Cowan

Parenting Journey Family

Support Home Visitor

Julia Cameron

Healthy Beginnings

Enhanced Home Visitor

Susan Corkum

ECE Program Coordinator

Ginny Mendl

Shelley Josey

Sandra Thornhill

Brenda Awalt

Sarah Harnish

Program Facilitators

Our Volunteer Board

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Jacqueline Sanford ~ Vice Chair

Jennifer Oldham ~ Secretary

Leigh Delorme

Darcie Drysdale

Jayne Breton

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Our Major Funders

NS Dept. of Community Services



The Family Corner (Continued from page 1)

pretending with a sequence of actions, you can help **pretend with invisible objects** (e.g. holding his empty hand up to his ear to talk on the 'phone') and **substitute an object for another** (for example, pretending a banana is a phone or a book is a birthday cake).

Join in your child's play... To encourage your child to pretend, you need to get his attention by joining in the play he's already doing.

Observe your child as he plays— Make sure you take the time to observe exactly what your child is doing and how he's pretending. That way, you can include his interests when you join in the play.

Join in by imitating your child with your own toy. For example, if he is 'feeding' a teddy bear with a spoon (an early stage of pretend), you can get your own stuffed animal and

spoon and do the same thing. Remember to make a comment, like, "Look, you're feeding Mr. Bear and I'm feeding Mr. Rabbit!" This will get his attention! Then you can interact with one another by going back and forth feeding your toy animals.

Show your child a new pretend play action... Now that you have your child's attention, show him how to extend his pretend play by adding a new action to make a sequence. For example, if he has a toy kitchen set, you can help him learn to pretend to make soup for his bear before feeding it to him. Model the action by pretending to stir the soup in a pot for your stuffed rabbit, making sure to comment at the same time: "Look, I'm making soup for Mr. Rabbit to eat" (as you 'stir' the soup with a toy spoon). 'He's very hungry!'

Give your child a chance to copy the new pretend action...

Once you've shown your child the action, **wait expectantly** to see what he'll

do. Waiting patiently, without saying anything, is the best cue you can give your child to tell him it's his turn to do something. If your child doesn't copy your action by making soup for his own bear, you can give him other cues, like:

Show him again while commenting.

Tell him what to do while pointing & commenting.

Using hand over hand help while commenting.

The ideas presented in this reproducible parent handout are from the new Hanen guidebook, Put Pretending into Your Child's Play. In this book, you'll find more examples & tips for how you can help your child take the next step in pretend play!

Find out more at www.hanen.org/pretendplay.

EASTERN SHORE FAMILY RESOURCE ASSOCIATION

OUR

PROGRAMS

- Cuddles & Kisses
- Great Expectations
- New Parent Group/Breast Friends
- Wee Bears
- Bookworms at Play
- Kinder Bears

OUR

FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

- Healthy Beginnings
- Parenting Journey
- Parent Link

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ISSUE 8

Eastern Shore Family Focus

MARCH — APRIL 2016

The Family Corner: Let's Pretend! Encouraging pretend play in children with social communication difficulties.

Pretend play is a critical part of children's development. When a child pretends to be a chef stirring soup or an astronaut going to the moon, he's building many different skills, including: Language skills, Social and Emotional skills, Problem Solving and Thinking skills.

What the research says about pretend play... In young children with autism, studies have shown that:

- Better pretend play skills at age 3 & 4 are linked to better language skills at ages 8 & 9
- The more varied and flexible a young child's pretend play, the more advanced his thinking skills are age 8 and 9.

Children with autism or social

communication difficulties often do not pretend as often as other children, and when they do, their play tends to be less complex. So adults must take some extra steps to provide them with opportunities and encouragement they need to learn.

Helping your child learn to pretend... There's a lot you can do to encourage your child to develop his pretend play skills.

Observe how your child is playing now... Is he using toys in "expected" or intended ways (for example, stacking rings or banging a toy drum) and he's combining many different actions together (e.g. putting a toy car on top of a car ramp, pushing a lever to make the car speed down, and then

putting the car back on top of the ramp) then your child has already developed **advanced functional play** skills. This is the stage in which children are ready to learn to pretend. Your child can now learn to pretend using real objects or miniature objects in 'expected' ways (e.g. he can learn to brush a doll's hair with a comb or pretend to be a doctor using a toy doctors kit.)

Does he already pretend with realistic objects? For example, does he pretend to give a doll a drink with a toy cup? If so, he's ready for you to expand his pretend play skills by **adding more pretend actions to create a sequence** - for example, giving the doll a drink then wiping its mouth with a cloth. And when your child is already

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Dates to Remember.....

March

Cuddles & Kisses ~ Mar 3

ESFRA Craft Fair ~ Mar 12 (10-3)

March Break ~ All regular programs cancelled Mar 12-18 (inclusive)

Play Dates Are Us 'March Break Days' ~ Mar 15,16,17 (10-11:30)

Grandparent group ~ Mar 21(10-12)

Winter Raffle Draw ~ Mar 24 at 11:00am



Good Friday ~ Mar 25

Easter Monday ~ Mar 28

April

Clothing Shop ~ Apr 2 (1-3)

Board Mtg. ~ Apr 4 (6:30-8:30)

Pre-Natal ~ Apr 5 (6:30-8:30)

Cuddles & Kisses ~ Apr 7

ESFRA Art Show ~ Apr 9 (10-12)

Preschool Screenings ~ Apr 21 &

22 (by appointment)



Trail Walk Days ~ Apr 21 & 22 (10am Musq. Harbour Trail)

May

Cuddles & Kisses ~ May 5

Board Mtg. ~ May 16 (6:30-8:30)

Programs end ~ May 21

Year End Family Picnic ~ May 28 (12:30-2:30)

June

ESFRA AGM ~ TBA



HOW TO STOP STRUGGLING WITH YOUR TEEN!

In this five-week (two-hour session) parent program, you will find out you are not alone in your feelings and frustrations-all parents have struggles with teens! 'How To Stop Struggling' is a program which takes place in a comfortable group setting and is a great way to relieve your stress, get information, share with others, learn new skills, and better ways to deal with your teens! Believe it or not, sometimes the changes you can make are pretty simple, and make a huge difference in your family life.

When: Starting sometime the Week of March 21, 2016 (Day to be determined)

Time: 7- 9pm

Where: ES Family Centre, Porters Lake

Please call the Family Centre at 902-827-1461 for more information or to register!

Topics include:

How to make YOUR life happy, Sorting out who owns the problem, Communication skills, Asserting your rights, Negotiating agreements, Taking action when agreements don't work....plus more!



For Parents of teens and pre-teens (ages 10-12) get a jump on the teen years!



Spring Great Expectations Prenatal Program

When: Tuesdays April 5-May 24

Where: Lake and Shore Community Recreation Centre (40 Inspiration Drive, Porters Lake)

Time: 6:30- 8:30

Facilitator: Julia Cameron, BPA HSRV, DSW, CD (DONA)

For more information or to register please call the Family Centre @ 902-827-1461 or 902-827-1463

Mums Night Out Winter/Spring 2016 dates

Where: ES Family Centre

When/Time: Tuesdays 7-9pm

Dates:

Mar 8, 22; Apr 12, 26; May 10, 24; Jun 7, 21



Great Expectations

One of the fun things about our prenatal program is that we have a prenatal reunion once all the babies are born! Two of our groups have now requested reunion-reunions once their babies turn one year old!! Thank you goes to Ashley Bellefontaine from Physio Link for coming and sharing tips and techniques for staying healthy during and after pregnancy!



Fundraiser News!!!!

2016 'Warm up to Winter' Raffle

Prizes: One night stay at the Atlantica Hotel to include dinner for two; An evening with Chef Aldo; Norwex Home cleaning products (approx. value : \$500)

Cost: Tickets are available at the Family Centre for \$2 each or 3 for \$5

Draw date: Mar 24/16 (All tickets and monies must be returned to the Family Centre by March 23 at 4pm)

ESFRA Craft Fair

Brings you a selection of the very best in... Crafts, Sweets & Treats, Jewelry Accessories, Décor, Books, Baby gear, Soaps and more...

When: **Saturday March 12, 2016**

Time: **10-3pm**

Where: **Lake and Shore Community Recreation Centre (40 Inspiration Drive, Porters Lake)**

Cost: **\$2 per adult (children free)**

All proceeds to benefit the ESFRA!



ESFRA's Art Show

Where: Chezzetcook & District Lions Club Community Centre, 89 East Chezzetcook Rd.

When: Saturday April 9, 2016

Time: 10-12

Cost: Pay what you can donation

Families, Friends & all Community Members are invited to see our gallery of ESFRA's children's' creativity on display! Drop by to view the artwork and enjoy a light refreshment in the tea room!



Come join us to see what 'little fingers' can create!

Community News...

Eastern Shore Family Resource Association in partnership with Helping Hands & Piper and Max

Spring Clothing Shop

FREE "Grab 'n' Go"

When: Saturday April 2, 2016

Time: 1—3pm

Where: Porters Lake Community Centre (4693 Hwy 7, next to the tennis courts)

Check out Lake & Shore Community Recreation Spring Sessions online @ www.lakeandshorerec.ca or call 902-827-2700. Brochures available at the centre and the Porters Lake Post Office.



We are accepting any gently used clothing. **NO TOYS OR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS!** Please drop off all donation items to either ESFRA or Eastern Shore Job Search Centre.

For more information, please contact Joanne MacMaster at 902-827-3887, jomacm@yahoo.ca or call the Family Centre at 902-827-1461.