

## Spring/Summer 2015

Welcome to the spring/ summer edition of our regional Child Care newsletter. This newsletter features three articles from the field , Questions and Answers regarding such hot button issues as “When do I need a food permit?”, updates from the ECE Registry and news about Licensing’s new software program (Hedgehog.Net) and what it means for you as well as links to practical resources for child care providers.

Spring and summer arrive fresh with possibilities for embracing and reinventing outdoor exploration and learning. Thank you to our contributors - Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House Preschool from Vancouver, Terra Nova Nature School (Preschool) from Richmond, and Wee Explore Early Learning Centre (Family Child Care) from Powell River – for sharing their programs and experience in inspiring children.

Since our last licensing newsletter we have experienced a change in staffing as well as a change of seasons. Welcome to our two new additions to the regional Child Care Licensing team –Richmond Child Care Licensing officer, Andrea Sawczenko and Vancouver Child Care Licensing Officer, Noreen Hautala – and a fond good bye and thank you to Vancouver Child Care Licensing Officer, Eve Adams. We wish Eve all the best on her retirement.

*“Every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end”*  
Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Wishing all of you a spring and summer of new beginnings.  
Enjoy the read!



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Powell River	604-485-3333	604-485-3305
Richmond	604-233-3147	604-233-3175
Sea to Sky	604-815-6852	604-892-2327
Sunshine Coast	604-885-8709	604-885-9725
Vancouver	604-675-3800	604-736-8651

## Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House Preschool, Vancouver

If you were traveling West Bound on East Broadway you would find Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House preschool tucked away in the second floor of the bustling Neighbourhood House, loving known as (MPNH). Children and Educators in the program are in a constant state of exploration and are engaged in fascinating play experiences. Mary Rodgers and Irina Zozulya have been an ECE team since 2008 and have worked diligently to push the boundaries of Preschool curriculum and have freed themselves from the convention of themes and status quo, providing an environment that is both inviting and thought provoking. Using a multitude of interest points and exploration of different materials, conversations spark continuously to extend imagination. The MPNH Preschool program truly embraces their image of the child in all aspects of the program, particularly when it comes to their belief that children are extremely capable individuals, able to self-direct and engage in creative problem solving activities.

MPNH Preschool program challenges the origins and relevance of typical childcare setting safety rules. In many childcare centers, it is the norm for children to go down the slide one at a time to ensure safety and order.

### *The slide*

The slide is often thought of as a means to quickly exit from a platform. The MPNH Preschool team find that it provides ways for children to build and create spaces (a tunnel that inspires imaginary spaces for examples). We support the children to negotiate their way up and down the slide, encouraging the children to use the strength of their body to climb. They do develop turn-taking skills moving up and down the slide simultaneously. Working together in this manner and navigating their movements as a collective is a practice that satisfies the need for children to belong to a group. They learn to respect each other's bodies and feel safe when they have different ways of experiencing the pull of gravity and the weight of many bodies. They are learning to control momentum fulfilling a sense of belonging, being safe and having fun , all at the same time.

Children have the freedom and are granted the space to reach common ground and work together to problem solve and find multiple solutions to the complex systems they are exposed to.



## *Sand Water and Beyond Table*

The length of this plastic table makes it possible for several children to negotiate and explore its nature with different purposes at the same time. At one end of the table a group of children may be found pouring a heavy bucket of water- at the bottom children may be collecting run off water into deep pools or making dams from blocks. Children test the slide's agility, transparency, weight and strength- jumping on it as a trampoline or sitting under it observing sand, objects and water slide down.

Perhaps it is the lack of sides to the water table that invites infinite exploration. The play is as open as the material itself. It encourages children to find their space where the movement of materials change continuous in a unique and fascinating way.

This water/sand table invites learning about how children use their bodies to lift large volumes of water, the force that is needed to send different materials down the slide and without water, how large blocks can dam the water at the bottom of a waterfall and how to use the flow of the water to construct water holes. This testing of water and sand on/under this table encourages many children to experiment with different materials and scientific principles. This work with the laws of physics, gives many children the opportunity to work out observations together in an informal yet same environment.

## *Clay Works*

We could soak clay in water for days to make it functional. Children in the MPNH program were given tools to break down the stone like clay to a useable form. Preschool children were offered real hammers and safety goggles and essentially support their trial and error efforts to break this solid matter into something manageable. They hammer it, drop in on the sidewalk, hit it with shovels, purpose and tenacity. After disappointing results, they finally add water with the hose. It is the squeezing with the toes that change the matter into something between a liquid and a solid that brings their joint efforts to a sense of fulfillment. The role of the teachers, in this case, is to set up a task which requires collaboration and difficulty. Overcoming the difficulties of working with stubborn materials sets the stage for solving other problems which require confidence, curiosity and courage.



For more information, please visit <http://www.mpnh.org/childcare>

## Terra Nova Nature School, Richmond

Terra Nova Nature School grew from the garden. Truly, it did! We met one fine sunny day in the community garden plots situated in Terra Nova Rural Park. It took only a few encounters for us to realize that we shared a dream— to work together as Early Childhood Educators to open a Nature School on the lands of Terra Nova. Our vision was to offer our community a unique and special place: a place where children could connect with the natural world and their community in a deep and authentic way; a place where children could have ample blocks of time to explore their wonderings; a place where children could enjoy the freedoms of childhood.

Terra Nova Rural Park is 63 acres of natural parkland that is home to numerous species of birds. It also includes farmland and projects managed by several not-for-profit societies, as well as the newly built Terra Nova Adventure Play Area. As an historical site, there remain several buildings from the early nineteenth century, including the Edwardian Cottage, which is the home of Terra Nova Nature School. The property itself is owned and maintained by the City of Richmond.

We approached the City with our idea, and Thompson Community Association came on board to fund and run the program. After months of talking, planning, and creating with the City and licensing, we arrived at the place where a dream became a reality. Terra Nova Nature School now operates as a one of a kind partnership between the City of Richmond, Thompson Community Association and the Richmond Schoolyard Society. We opened in September, 2014 with full enrolment and brave, enthusiastic families willing to jump into the unknowns of an outdoor preschool. Like most restorations, completion of the building was delayed by a couple of months, so we required an alternative location the Red Barn at the south end of the park. Together with Senior Licensing Officer Marcie Archeck, and our licensing officer Andrea Sawczenko, we tackled the challenges of licensing a temporary space. We learned so much about problem solving, teamwork, and thinking outside the box to meet licensing standards.



Our days are filled with laughter and discovery!

We spend at least half of our program time outside. Even when it is wet and cold, we are outside, rain jackets and rain pants on, searching for the deepest puddles and sliding down our 'muddy hill'. The children are captivated by the land and its animals. The seasonal changes allow for ever new inspirations so that our provocations and curriculum truly are generated by the world around us.



Philosophically we adhere to the guiding principles of the Reggio Emilia approach – we see children as capable co-creators of their learning; the parents as partners in their children’s education; the environment as the third teacher; and the use of documentation to inform our teaching practice. We are honoured to work together as Early Childhood Educators at Terra Nova Nature School. We appreciate daily the gifts of the outdoor environment, and believe strongly that programs of this nature truly enhance the lives of the children and families in our community.



For further information, please visit [www.terrannotureschool.com](http://www.terrannotureschool.com)

## Wee Explore Early Learning Centre, Powell River

Wee Explore Early Learning Centre is a Family Child Care located on 5 acres of land just outside Powell River and is operated by Angela Gross. The following is the philosophy from Angela's family handbook.

*"Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment." Maria Montessori*

*Children are intrigued with natural phenomena and the physical properties around them - things such as light, colour, reflection, sound and motion. These things are mysterious and magical to them. But children are also eager and natural scientists, full of wonder, observing closely and taking action to try out their theories about how the world works. In a centre filled with planned opportunity to encounter nature's wonders, children will continue to develop inquisitive minds and reverence for the world. Through an intellectually engaging environment and opportunity to explore their questions and theories, young children can develop lifelong skills, a deeper understanding of themselves, their curiosities about the world around them, and respect for our amazing environment.*



We take our learning outside all seasons, regardless of the weather. I like involving the children in setting up our learning areas, so they helped me to build our outdoor circle area, digging in our stumps, brushing them off, and raking up the area so it was neat and tidy. Now we have a place to gather for our learning activities.

Our workbooks, magnifying glasses and scissors go everywhere with us. We search, snip and record seasonal growth or just cool things we find while out on our adventures. Here we were searching for signs of Spring. Now we can go back to this same area and see the difference the warm sun has made on helping everything to grow and beautify our forest. But mostly playing in the dirt is the most fun.



Here Tiernan is helping with sanding some cedar trays that the children used to serve their Moms tea for our Mother's Day Tea Party. I love when the children get involved using tools and developing skills for lifelong learning.

Isabella is helping me to hammer together some alder branches that the children and I cut down together to build more outdoor slate easels. So getting them involved in creating our learning spaces has been so fun. The children reflect back on these experiences everyday as they play and watch their friends using what they helped build.



Here we were experimenting with making teas from hemlock, spruce and fir trees. The kids loved it, and would collect branches to take home to make tea for their parents. It was also nice to have a warm drink on a cool winter day.



We also have a garden that the children helped me plant potatoes in. We learned about how potatoes grow, measured each hole to make sure we dug 5 inches down, planted it sprouts to the sky to reach to sun, gently covered it in dirt and built a mountain of dirt around it, and then finished it off with a little chant....Grow potato grow....grow potato grow :) Now the children plant their own pretend gardens out in the forest when we are playing!!

I think the best part of this program is watching the children create their own learning. Having resources available that encourage them to come up with their own use of the materials is amazing. They watch and help me create new spaces every day and I think it is starting to rub off on them. We have a designated Ice Cream Stump Shop, and Fire Hall Stump, we made a rock maze together than turns into a race way full of bridges and tunnels



A lot of our learning curriculum is based on Montessori methods and using natural materials. I love setting up the different centres and watching the children create their learning.

On the sand trays the children are practicing their squiggly lines, shapes, making hand prints. They also love cleaning up all the spilled sand with their little broom and dust pan. Our classroom is always neat and tidy. The children all help to clean up each other's activities, and love the opportunity to spray and clean our chalkboards, or sweep up a mess.

I love watching and encouraging my older preschoolers to read and create stories for our younger friends. It's funny to watch and listen to their retelling of stories. Sometimes they even make the same expressions and emphasis on what is happening as I do when I read the stories. I always remind them that they are teachers too!!!



Erik finds a spider egg sac



Slate painting easels



Ice cream stump shop





**Question: Is it safe to use a portable bed or playpen for naptime?**

Many care providers use either portable cribs or playpens for children to nap in. Portable cribs and playpens look very similar. They have a flexible folding frame, a net mesh along the sides and padded rim along the top. Portable cribs are usually higher off the ground than a playpen (which can also be referred to as a play yard).

Portable cribs are designed and intended for infants to sleep in. Each manufacturer of portable cribs and playpens has specific instructions as to the weight, height and mobility of the child that they are designed for and their intended use.

**Playpens are not intended to be used for unsupervised sleep because they do not meet the same safety requirements and are not as durable as cribs.**

Health Canada reminds parents and care providers that the safest place for an unsupervised infant to sleep in, is a crib. Babies and young children should never be placed to sleep in products that are not specifically designed for sleep



Portable crib: higher off the ground



Playpen: lower to the ground

As with any type of infant, toddler or preschool equipment, safety precautions must be taken including:

1. Making sure the portable crib or playpen has not been recalled. You can get this information from [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps-recalls](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps-recalls).
2. Not using a portable crib that you do not have the manufacturer's instructions for or that is damaged or broken.
3. Following the manufacturer's instructions about the set up and intended use.

You can also go to the Health Canada website at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) for more tips and information about the use of portable cribs, playpens and other infant and child products.

**Question: When do I need a food permit?**

For information on food permits please follow this link:

[http://www.vch.ca/media/Child\\_Care\\_Facilities\\_Safe\\_Healthy\\_Food\\_Final.pdf](http://www.vch.ca/media/Child_Care_Facilities_Safe_Healthy_Food_Final.pdf)

## Question: How do I fill out an Incident report?

The purpose of an incident report is to make sure that incidents are reported and reviewed in a timely manner by the facility, and reviewed in a timely manner by Licensing. This helps to promote a high standard of care, safety, health and dignity of the persons in care, and also complies with the legal responsibility to report incidents as stated in Section 55 (2) (a) and (b) of the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

**How to complete the form:** The definitions of reportable incidents are listed in Schedule H of the Child Care Licensing Regulation. As soon as possible after a reportable incident occurs the facility staff should complete an Incident Report form. Additional pages can be added if more space is required.

The image shows a screenshot of the 'INCIDENT REPORT' form. The form is divided into several sections: 'FACILITY INFORMATION', 'INCIDENT INFORMATION', 'PERSONS INVOLVED', 'INCIDENT DETAILS', and 'CORRECTIVE MEASURES'. Each section contains various fields and checkboxes for data entry. The form is titled 'INCIDENT REPORT' at the top right.

How to complete each section of the Incident Report	Explanation
Facility Name, Address, Phone Number	Complete this section as it appears on your licence.
License Number	Complete this section as it appears on your licence.
Name of person (s) in care affected	Fill in the name of the person who was affected by the incident
Service Type	Complete this section as it appears on your licence.
Date of Birth and Sex	This is for the person affected by the incident
Name of other persons involved	Anyone else affected by the incident
Number of persons in care affected	Record the number of persons in care affected by the incident.
Incident type	Refer to the reportable incident definitions in Schedule H of the Child Care Licensing Regulation to choose the correct one.
Date/Time of Incident	Record the date and time the incident occurred.
Location of Incident	Identify exactly where the incident occurred such as bathroom, activity room, playground.
Equipment in Use	Include if applicable
Details of Incident	Describe the incident. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include the number of staff and children present, and the activity that was in progress.</li> <li>Describe what led up to the incident</li> <li>For any injuries include the location on the body of any cuts, sprains or broken bones. Describe the size of the cut and if there was any bleeding.</li> <li>Include details of what staff did to provide any first aid</li> </ul>
Injury Area	Check all appropriate boxes.
Injury Type	Check all appropriate boxes.
Notification	Identify who was notified and when notification occurred.
Describe Corrective Measures	Describe all of the actions taken (Include all causes of this incident and all actions taken which will prevent similar incidents in the future).
Form Completed by	Name of person who completed the form.
Licensee/Manager (name)	Include the name of the Licensee/Manager

**Submitting the report:** Section 55(2) of the Child Care Licensing Regulation requires that a licensee must notify the medical health officer within **24 hours**. To satisfy the regulatory requirements Licensees may report to Licensing within 24 hours by phone or email. The actual report should be sent by email as soon as possible after the incident.

**What happens after I report:** A follow up to a report by a Licensing Officer can range from no further contact, or a phone call, to a visit to the facility. Your Licensing Officer will contact you to let you know what will happen next.



## Early Childhood Educator Registry Terminology Change from “Licence to Practice” to “Certificate”

The Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Registry is the provincial body responsible for certification of individuals who qualify for an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) or an Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) Certificate.

To ensure consistency with the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (CCALA) and the Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR), the ECE Registry has changed the term ‘licence to practice’ to ‘certificate’ effective Fall 2014. Individuals who currently hold a licence to practice will not have to replace that document with a new certificate. A current licence to practice will remain valid until its expiry, and a certificate will be issued upon renewal. Licensing Officers, potential employers and the public are encouraged to continue using the ECE Registry’s certification validation webpage to confirm the status of an ECEs and ECEAs certification.

Educational institutions, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) programs, Licensing Officers, and others who are communicating with ECEs and ECEAs (e.g. those offering professional development opportunities) are asked to move to the terminology ‘certificate’ and ‘certification’ when referring to the credentials required to work in the field of ECE.

For information on the ECE Registry, application, renewal requirements, and educational information, please refer to the ECE Registry website at <http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/ece/index.htm>

## Hedgehog.net

Fifteen years ago Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), Community Care Facilities Licensing moved from conducting inspections on paper to a computerized system. In February of this year we upgraded to a new computer inspection and file management system with a greater ability to track work electronically and facilitate consistency across VCH. The intent of the computerized system is to store file information electronically including documents submitted by you, the Licensees. Examples of this are applications and documents related to the licensing process, incident reports, and exemption requests. Emailing these types of documents versus mailing, faxing, or dropping off to the office is greatly appreciated as this assists us with this process. However, we do continue to accept documents in all forms of delivery.

Please note that the public posting for inspections is temporarily suspended during the implementation of our new system. A few of you may have had delays in receiving reports or have had errors on reports. As with any new system there will be areas that require our attention however we appreciate your patience as we move through this transition.

Please contact your licensing officer should you have any specific questions regarding inspections.

## Warm weather window safety

As the weather warms up, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) and BC Children’s Hospital are reminding parents and caregivers of young children to make sure their window and balcony safety locks are in place.

In 2013, BC Children’s Hospital cared for 21 children who fell through windows or off balconies. Paramedics see the critical injuries that result from falls from windows and balconies, most often including broken bones and facial and head trauma. “If you look after young children or have kids visiting your home, window and door safety locks are your best friend,” said BCEHS Unit Chief Marilyn Oberg. “Little children move quickly and sometimes without reason or warning, so ensuring security locks are in place is a simple and effective safety measure for the warmer months.”

“With temperatures rising, we often see an increase in falls from windows, and young children are particularly vulnerable to these falls,” said Dr. Ash Singhal, pediatric neurosurgeon and medical director, BC Children’s Hospital Trauma Program. “Many of the injuries can be quite severe, including skull fractures and brain injuries and potentially cause long term effects for the child.” While it might be tempting to leave a window open a crack to let in some fresh air during the warmer months, remember that young children are innately curious and natural climbers, and do not understand the risk of their actions. They can be strong enough to widen an unlocked window. Toddlers have a high centre of gravity, so even leaning on a screen can cause a fall, likely headfirst, which can lead to serious injuries.

### Safety tips to prevent falls from windows:

- Don’t underestimate a child’s mobility; children begin climbing before they can walk.
- Move household items away from windows to discourage children from climbing to peer out. Toddlers may use anything as a step stool to get higher.
- Be aware that window screens will not prevent children from falling through – they keep bugs out, not children in.
- Install window guards on windows above the ground level. These act as a gate in front of the window.
- Or, fasten the windows, so that they cannot open more than 10 centimetres (four inches). Children can fit through spaces as small as 12 centimetres (five inches) wide. In either case, ensure there is a safe release option in case of a house fire.
- Don’t leave children unattended on balconies or decks. Move furniture or planters away from the edges as kids can climb up and over.
- Talk to your children about the dangers of opening and playing near windows, particularly on upper floors of the home.

BCEHS governs the emergency medical services system in BC and provides residents, visitors and health care professionals with pre-hospital emergency and inter-facility patient transfer services. BCEHS oversees the BC Ambulance Service and the BC Patient Transfer Network and is supported by the Provincial Health Services Authority. For more information, visit [www.bcas.ca](http://www.bcas.ca)

BC Children’s Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, provides expert care for the province’s most seriously ill or injured children, including newborns and adolescents. BC Children’s is an academic health centre affiliated with the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the Child & Family Research Institute. For more information, visit [www.bcchildrens.ca](http://www.bcchildrens.ca)



### *Food Flair resource manual*

Food Flair is part of the LEAP BC family of resources that support young children's development in early literacy, physical activity, healthy eating and play. Formerly called Food Flair for Child Care, this resource was developed by the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport in partnership with 2010 Legacies Now. It has been revised after talking with childcare providers, parents and professionals in nutrition, physical activity and early childhood education. LEAP BC is a 2010 Legacies Now program offering resources and training to support early learning specialists and caregivers as they actively participate in children's early learning and development.

[www.vch.ca/media/Food Flair Resource Manual December 2014.pdf](http://www.vch.ca/media/Food_Flair_Resource_Manual_December_2014.pdf)

### *Healthy Beginnings Manual*

The Healthy Beginnings 2-5 Guidelines are in addition to the BC Child Care Licensing Regulation. They are voluntary guidelines developed by experts in physical activity and nutrition to provide guidance to early learning practitioners who want to provide the optimal health-promoting childcare environment. These guidelines reflect best-practice. The Healthy Beginnings Manuals have been adapted for BC use.

Healthy Eating and Sugary Drinks

<http://healthybeginningspreschoolers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/HESD-for-BC3.pdf>

Physical Activity and Screen time

<http://healthybeginningspreschoolers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/PAST-for-BC1.pdf>

Website

<http://healthybeginningspreschoolers.ca/jurisdictions/british-columbia/>

### *YMCA/BC Ministry of Health Healthy Eating After School Resource*

Healthy Eating After School is a resource designed to help after school care programs create an environment where children learn about preparing and eating healthy food. It's not a set curriculum, but rather a resource that guides after school care providers towards implementing healthy eating guidelines that best fits the needs of their programs. The resource includes nutrition and physical activity guidelines, a variety of planning tools and cooking sessions designed especially for kids.

The resource is available in print form at select Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR) locations throughout the province or online in the form of an e-course. The e-course also provides six hours of continuing education credits.

<http://www.vanymca.org/health/HEAS/2014/>