

Growing with Centennial

Play, Laugh, Learn

Welcome!

Welcome to the very first edition of Growing with Centennial! This is the first official newsletter of Centennial Infant and Child Centre’s Early Intervention Program. This newsletter has been designed to help you support your child’s development in a number of ways. It includes ideas for play with homemade toys, tips for movement, information for infants, communication strategies, updates about what’s happening at Centennial and much more!

We hope this will be a way for all of us to share personal stories, news and resources. It will be published approximately every 3 months, and your Early Childhood Interventionist will bring you a copy. It will also be available on our website: www.cicc.ca. If you have any questions, please ask your CICC Early Interventionist.

Enjoy!



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Letter from the Director

We are very excited about our first newsletter for families in the Early Intervention Program (EI). In addition to the regular visits you receive from our Early Interventionists, we thought you might find it helpful to learn more about community resources, new ideas for supporting your child and other ways our organization can assist you.

Here are a few facts and figures about Centennial (CICC). For over 50 years, CICC has supported thousands of infants, young children and their families in Toronto. You might be interested to know that in 2018, our organization supported 402 children in the EI program, and our dedicated EI staff conducted over 3000 home visits. Hospitals and physicians are our primary source of referrals. For example, the world-renowned Sunnybrook Neonatal Unit exclusively refers their premature infants to CICC.

Our staff are experts in child development who will help guide you through these early days in your child’s life. We also hope you will benefit from the other services CICC offers such as our preschool which many EI children attend once they are two years of age. We also have workshops on a variety of topics relevant to your needs.

Thank you for joining the Centennial community. Please feel free to share any ideas you have for future editions of the newsletter. We welcome your feedback!

Barbara Hannah
Executive Director

Who we are & what we do

Our Mission Statement:

“Centennial Infant and Child Centre strengthens families and their young children with special needs to develop confidence and skills for the best start in life”.

Centennial Infant and Child Centre is committed to the development and education of young children with developmental challenges.

Centennial focuses on the individual needs of each child and family through early intervention at home, in our integrated preschool program and through participation in community programs.

Staying Active this Winter

Top 10 way to keep active indoors this winter

By Lori McCrindle B.Sc. OT Reg.(Ont.)

Lori is an Occupational Therapist who works in our Early Intervention program.

Children should get at least 180 minutes of physical activity per day according to the Canadian Paediatrics Society (CPS, 2012), but during our cold winters this can be difficult to achieve.

Here is a list of the Top 10 indoor activities you can do with your child at home to beat the winter blues.

- 1) **Balloon ball** – use your entire body to keep a balloon off the ground for as long as you can.
- 2) **Indoor basketball** – use a laundry basket or an old box to practice shooting hoops with a ball.
- 3) **Obstacle course** – set up a simple obstacle in your house e.g. over the couch and under the table. Once your child has mastered these steps, continue to add one more obstacle to the challenge. You could make this a memory challenge to see if they can remember all of the steps.
- 4) **Stair climb** – take the stairs instead of the elevator. Count the stairs of your house or building as you climb or sing a song.
- 5) **Ramp runs** – if you're lucky enough to have a ramp in your lobby or neighbourhood, walking up and down the ramp can improve your child's balance and body awareness.
- 6) **Tunnels** – build a tunnel under a small table or between two chairs by placing a sheet over top and crawl through the tunnel in different ways. Adapt this activity by sliding on your back, on your side, move forwards, backwards, slow or fast.
- 7) **Pillow jumping** – if jumping on the bed is not permitted, place a large pillow or couch cushion on the ground to jump on. You might have to hold your child's hands to teach them how to jump.
- 8) **Balance beam** – place a line of painters tape on the ground and try to walk forwards and backwards without falling off. If this is too easy, use the tape to create a hopscotch design and start hopping and jumping!
- 9) **Dance party** – play your favourite upbeat music and dance around with your child.
- 10) **Animal walks** – walk like an animal. You could be a ferocious bear or a slow moving turtle. Take turns deciding with which animal you could be.

Please adapt these ideas to suit your child, your home and your comfort level. Play safe and have fun!

Play and Learn

Homemade Toys with Frances Mahoney,
CICC, Early Childhood Interventionist

Container Play

Container play can be fun and easy to play using materials at home.

- Putting toys in and taking toys out
Promotes grasping skills - different ways to grab and hold an item
- Supports progress of using both hands at midline. Promotes one hand grasping, one hand stabilizing container
- Promotes hand-eye co-ordination
- Supports two hand transferring (one hand to other hand grasp)
- Promotes voluntary release into container
- Encourages learning through repetition of task
- Extends vocabulary: "in", "out", "bye, bye ball"
- Promotes problem solving skills. Child will look to where items went or shake the container to get item out
- Turn taking with parent/caregiver



Communication Corner

“Waiting”

By Chris Guest, Speech-Language Pathologist, Early Abilities

Why Wait? Waiting is a powerful tool when helping our children to communicate more.

If you have ever learned a new language you may be able to relate. Someone says something, you translate it into your first language, you decide what you want to say, then you put together the words in the new language before responding. If your communication partner doesn't wait, you will miss your turn!

- Waiting allows your child to figure out what has been said and put together a response. For some kids, this can take quite a while.
- Waiting is also an indication that your child is expected to do something. If you keep filling in the spaces your child may be quite happy to observe rather than try to take their own turn.
- When should you wait? Imitate something your child has done or said, make a comment about what's going on, give the child a choice, make a toy do something, etc. then wait. Silently count to 5. You will find this is a good amount of time to allow your child the chance to take their turn, but it won't give them enough time to lose interest in you. If your child does not take a turn, you can take another turn.
- Remember to wait expectantly and quietly. You want your child to see that you are waiting for them to take a turn. Look interested, lean forward, whatever you do to convey interest in another person.

Try waiting for your child to take a turn and see what happens!

If you have any questions about waiting or other communication strategies you might use with your child please ask your Speech-Language Pathologist or Early Interventionist.

Ideas for Infants!

Face to face with your baby

by Jessie Kimmel, CICC, Early Childhood Interventionist

As Early Childhood Interventionists, we are lucky to be able to see young infants (sometimes 1 or 2 months old!) settling into their home environment. So often parents ask us "How do I play with my baby?", "What toys would my baby like?", "How do I encourage my baby's language?" The answer to all three of these questions is often the same.

Face to face time is the best way to get to know your baby, play with your baby and encourage language all at the same time. It helps your baby know that you are paying attention to them, interested in them and connecting with them. Being face to face also helps establish eye contact and eventually imitation, which are major building blocks of early language. *You are your baby's best toy!*

Here is a list of ideas our own Frances Mahoney has collected regarding face to face time:

- **Get down on your baby's level or raise your baby up to yours**
- **Watch your baby and respond to their sounds and movements**
- **Say the words for your baby - interpret cries sounds, and actions into words**
- **Be lively! Attract your baby with touch, changes in your voice, face and actions**
- **Use rhythm and music when you speak**
- **Take turns - your baby makes a sound, then you make a sound**
- **Repeat words, rhymes, songs, games and stories**
- **Talk about what you and your baby are doing, seeing, smelling, tasting, feeling and hearing. Use simple language.**



What to look for in a Winter Boot

by Suzanne Murray CICC Physiotherapist

Winter is on its way, and looking for winter boots that are appropriate for your child's needs can be a frustrating experience. Here are some tips on buying winter footwear.

1. Buy early! Don't leave it until the first snow fall! Typically around October, stores start to receive their winter boot inventory. Shopping early means you have a good choice of styles and sizes.
2. Kids who wear SMOs get enough support from a winter boot, and therefore do not need to wear their orthotic inside the boot.
3. Kids who have AFOs are encouraged to wear their AFO inside the boot. If this is the case for your child, choose a boot that has an opening as close to the toe as possible. This is generally a boot with a flexible tongue at the front. Sorel has winter boots with a good opening. Test different brands as you may find a boot with even more flexibility than a Sorel. If buying a Sorel boot, note the Sorel insert can be cut at the front to provide additional space for the AFO, making the boot easier to put on.
4. Buy a winter boot that will fit your child for the next few months. Often stores advise 1 and a half sizes up. **This is often too big.** If your child's feet grow slowly then buy what fits with at least a thumbs space between the top of the big toe and tip of boot.

Foundation News

We are half way to our goal of \$10 million to increase and protect our capacity to serve children with special needs! Our story has been well received and generously supported by old friends and many, many new ones. While we still have a way to go to reach our goal, the joint Building Committee and the negotiating team of the Foundation Board have been busy searching for a new home for Centennial.

You can help by just sharing our story with everyone you know. You might be surprised at how many of your friends and acquaintances will be interested and might want to help. Thanks for caring and we will keep you posted!

We're social, join the conversation!
@CentennialsKids
fb.me/CentennialKids

powering
potential | the campaign for
centennial kids

Things to Think About

Kindergarten Registration

Registration begins February 4, 2019. You must register at your home school, which is determined by your postal code.

It is important to register as soon as possible. If you need assistance, please ask your Early Interventionist. You can register online or in person. Below is the online link for more information:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/EarlyYears/KindergartenMonth>

Centennial Presents:

Financial Planning for Families with Children with Special Needs

with Geoffrey Zaldin, Co-Founder of Special Needs Financial, Inc.

February 26, 7-8:30pm

Where: Centennial Infant and Child Centre, 1580 Yonge Street

Come hear what you need to know to financially support your child with special needs, now and in the future.

Topics covered will include: RDSPs, taxes and medical expenses, the Disability Tax Credit, estate planning and more.

RSVP to Jacqui at jrobbins@cicc.on.ca or 416-935-0200 ext. 231, or to your EI.

CICC Specialized Integrated Preschool Snapshot

“Aria busy feeding babies!”

