

NEWS & VIEWS

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FOR STUDENT FAMILIES AT UVIC



DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Quong

STAFF

Emma Chalifour
Brittany Johnston
Johanna Payjack

FACULTY COORDINATOR

Daniel Scott

NEWSLETTER

Avril Nagel

ADDRESS

UVIC Family Centre
39208- 2375 Lam Circle
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 1700 STN CSC
Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2

PHONE: 250-472-4062
E-MAIL: familyc@uvic.ca

Understandably the following article by Kristine Salzmann reminded us of the UVic Family Centre. What kind of friendships have you made as a result of the Family Centre? What are your favourite things about the programs? Send your answers to fcnews@uvic.ca for inclusion in an upcoming newsletter.

Parents get something out of programs too

The other day, I was thinking about how my needs often aren't that different from my toddler. Like toddlers, there are times when parents need to vent. We need to learn. We need our choices to feel validated. We need to socialize. And for all this, we need support.

I'm fortunate to have a loving, supportive family, but on weekdays it's mainly the dynamic duo of Elise and I. And as much as I love my daughter, sometimes I need to talk with someone who can put together more than a four-word sentence. My salvation? Family drop-in programs.

On weekday mornings, I often take Elise to Semiahmoo Family Place (SFP), a family resource centre in South Surrey, or to a StrongStart BC program in Cloverdale. The two early learning programs – the first a non-profit with a nominal fee and the latter a program funded by the Ministry of Education – have become a regular part of my schedule, places we go to without second thought.

From our first day we were warmly welcomed and made to feel at home by the educators, not to mention the fellow moms, dads and caregivers who bring their babies, toddlers and preschool-aged children to the programs. (cont'd p. 2)

Family Centre Weekly Programs

Monday – Family Learn and Share	10:00am-12noon
Monday – Make and Take	7:00-9:00pm
Wednesday – Under 5 Playgroup	10:00am-12noon
Wednesday – Afterschool Program	3:30-5:00pm
Friday – Under 5 Playgroup	10:00am-12noon

In addition to weekly programs, the Family Centre is open Monday (9:30-12), Tuesday (11-3), Wednesday (9:30-3:00) and Friday (9:30-12). For more information contact the Family Centre through Facebook or by email at familyc@uvic.ca.



Find us on Facebook

(Cont'd p. 1) Nowadays when my daughter and I leave our house in the morning, I look forward to finding out what familiar faces I'll see that day. And I noticed, while sending out e-vites for Elise's second birthday, that many of my friends are new within the past year. These are fellow moms I've met through SFP and StrongStart and with whom I now make play dates outside the programs.

Elise and I would have a bad case of ennui – or we would have spent a lot more money on other activities – if it weren't for these two places. And how sane would I be today without the people I've met there? Sitting with another mom who has gone through similar trials while our children do puzzles has done wonders for my mental well-being, which in turn makes me a better parent.

I might be a more attentive parent at these programs as well, a sentiment echoed in a conversation I had with another mom. At StrongStart, she noted, she's not worried about dirty dishes and unwashed laundry and can devote her attention more fully to her daughter. Now, my impression of this mom is that she's a great mom all the time. But I get her point. At home there are meals to be made, floors to be swept.

Of course, I wouldn't take Elise if she didn't look forward to it. She eagerly talks of seeing the educators at StrongStart and SFP (mentioning them often gets us out the door in a more timely fashion) and asks by name if her little friends will be there. She finds joy in dancing during circle time, attempting crafts, molding Play-Doh, and discovering new toys. Pamphlets on community resources are also available at the programs, and the educators themselves are endless sources of information, even if it's simply in watching how they interact with the children.

Semiahmoo Family Place and StrongStart BC have enriched my past year as a parent, and have surely positively impacted Elise's development as well. I hope they continue to receive the support from the community and provincial government that they deserve.

Kristine Salzmann is a former South Delta Leader reporter and stay at home parent to a 2-year-old toddler. Reprinted with permission from the South Delta Leader (www.southdeltaleader.com).



WHAT IS SOCIAL THINKING? Social Thinking = ME + YOU = US

Social thinking is what we do when we interact with people: we think about them! And how we think about people affects how we behave, which in turn affects how others respond to us, which in turn affects our own emotions. Social Thinking is a vocabulary program and curriculum that was created to help develop and expand a child's social abilities and understanding, but it does more than just teach kids how they should behave in social settings. It introduces key words to children that explicitly teach and explain many of the unwritten social rules that exist in social situations.

SOCIAL THINKING IN ACTION!

How many times have you asked your child to “please look at me when I am speaking to you!” The importance of eye contact in social interactions is one example of an unwritten social rule that many have picked up on, but struggle with. Social Thinking teaches the purpose of “thinking with your eyes”— both for the speaker and for the listener. For the speaker, having somebody look at them when they are talking helps them to feel heard in the conversation. For the listener, looking at who is talking helps to show that they are listening, in addition to helping them to pick up on visual cues (facial expressions, pointing/eye gaze) that they may have missed otherwise. To hear more about Social Thinking, come to Family Learn and Share Monday November 25.

--Kellie Lanktree, CYC Practicum Student



Introducing Dr. Daniel Scott

Daniel Scott is the chair of the Family Centre Advisory Committee. He first became involved with the Family Centre around 7 to 8 years ago and is excited to be coming back as the Human and Social Development Faculty representative. He has his Masters and PhD from the Faculty of Education at UVic and is currently the Director of the School of Child and Youth Care. His main interest in the field is in child and adolescent spirituality. Daniel claims to have lived or worked in every province in Canada for at least 3 days and, in his spare time, Daniel enjoys writing and performing his poetry at local coffee shops.

- Rebecca Zunder and Kellie Lanktree, CYC Practicum Students

Chanukah? Hannukah? Hanukkah?



For me, Chanukah has always been my favourite holiday. It's a time for family and friends to gather together and play dreidel, to eat yummy latkes and to light the menorah. It's a time to celebrate the festival of lights – when only one day's worth of oil lasted for 8! It was a miracle! Unlike most Jewish holidays, Chanukah isn't very religious. The only real tradition that goes along with it is the lighting of the menorah and reciting the blessings. The menorah is lit at sunset each night. You begin on the first night by lighting the candle on the far right and adding one more each night until you get to the last one on the left. On this night, my family and I sit around our menorahs (we've built up quite the collection over the years) until the very last candle has gone out.

This year, Chanukah begins at sunset on Wednesday, November 27. This will be my first Chanukah away from home so I'm a little sad I won't be spending it with my family but excited to start my own new traditions that I can keep for years to come! Happy Chanukah Everyone!

- Rebecca Zunder, CYC Student

UVic Family Centre Clothing Exchange



Did you know
Family Centre
exchange?

that the UVic
has a clothing

Each term, new clothes are donated to the Family Centre for the community to use. The "tub," as it is affectionately called, is often filled to the brim with previously-loved clothes searching for a new home. There are normally a variety of clothing available, ranging from newborn to adult sizes. If you are in need of a new jacket, or your child has misplaced yet another pair of gloves, stop by and take a look at the clothes in the tub!

Also, if your or your child's closet is overflowing with clothes you no longer need, feel free to talk to us about adding to our tub! This is a great opportunity to get in some early spring cleaning while also contributing to the local community!

For more information:

familyc@uvic.ca 250-472-4062 <http://web.uvic.ca/family-centre/>



Take a moment on November 11th, 2013 to remember and acknowledge the efforts and sacrifices made for peace around the world.

Programs and Events

Family Learn and Share

On Monday mornings from **10am-12noon** the Family Centre hosts a drop-in program for families to interact and learn from one another. Each week there is a designated focus topic and facilitator. This month on **November 4th: Be Safe - Facilitated by a personal safety officer; November 11th: No program; November 18th: tba; November 25th: Social Thinking with Kellie and Ciara** (see description on page 2). Please contact us by email, phone or Facebook if you have any questions or suggestions.

Playgroups:

The Family Centre hosts fun and energetic playgroups for children under five with their caregiver. Join facilitator Johanna Payjack, an Early Childhood Educator, on **Wednesday and Friday mornings from 10am to 12noon**. Our goal is to provide children with a rich environment in which they can learn through play. Expect engaging activities in the main room, along with free play in the toy room. There is typically a snack time and elements of art, crafts, story, songs and finger-plays incorporated into the morning. The schedule is flexible to enable us to follow the lead of the children.

After School Club:

School Aged Kids (Grades 1-6) are invited to the Family Centre's After School Club on **Wednesdays from 3:30 - 5:00 pm**. We will be doing a variety of activities each week. These might include outdoor games like soccer, tag, and croquet, as well as puzzles, projects, board games, talent shows and crafts.

Make and Take:

Need a night out? The Family Centre is open on **Monday evenings from 7-9pm**. Currently the group is working on knitting projects, but feel free to bring your own craft project along and work on it while getting to know other people in the community. Don't have a craft project? Can only make it for an hour? Come anyway! The kettle is always on and we'd love to see you!

Book Club:

The Family Centre has a book club that meets on the third Thursday of each month to discuss a novel chosen by the group. If you enjoy reading and would like to get together with others please come along. To find out more go to our Facebook page.

Community Events



Drop-In Family Story Time

Nellie McClung Library

Every Wednesday 10:30-11:00

For young children and their families; children under 3 must be accompanied by an adult. Fun-filled stories, songs, rhymes, and puppets. No registration required.

UVic Hands and Hearts Fair

University Centre Lobby

November 19th, 10-4:30

This campus-wide artisan fair is in its 13th successful year as part of the UVic United Way campaign. Over \$20,000 has been raised since 2000 and almost all proceeds go to the United Way. Find unique, handmade gifts and support local charities. **Note: Cash sales only, no debit or credit cards.**

6th Annual Christmas Tree Light Up Centennial Square

Saturday November 23rd, 4-5:30

Join us for the annual light-up of the giant sequoia tree, including music performances, roving entertainment, and free treats before the Island Farms Santa Claus Parade. Sponsored by the Downtown Victoria Business Association and the City of Victoria.

Island Farms Santa Claus Parade

Government Street

Saturday November 23rd, 5:45

Duck Day

Swan Lake Nature Centre

Sunday, November 24, Noon to 3:00 p.m.

Some dabble, some dive, but they're all ducks. We'll explore the amazing adaptations ducks have for living on the lake and discover who's who in the duck world. Drop-in anytime. Admission by donation.