

Fall Issue

Oct./Nov. 2007

# Early Intervention Nova Scotia Newsletter

## Useful Websites...

[www.firstsigns.com](http://www.firstsigns.com)

[www.snis.com](http://www.snis.com)

[www.todaysparent.com](http://www.todaysparent.com)

[www.eins.ca](http://www.eins.ca)

[www.kijiji.com](http://www.kijiji.com) (see special needs section for some great deals on second hand specialty items!)

[www.signwithme.com](http://www.signwithme.com)

[www.parentsmatter.ca](http://www.parentsmatter.ca)

[www.ecians.ca](http://www.ecians.ca)

## Check inside for:

**ECIANS Update**

**Letter to Minister**

**Program Updates**

And lots of other fun stuff too!

**EINS, 14 Court Street, Suite 200, Unit 129, Truro, NS,  
B2N 3H7**

## Update from Our Board Chair

Dear EINS Members,

Fall is here; I have a beautiful blanket of leaves in my backyard to prove it. The mornings are cool again and Tedo is in his glory, me I'm finding I need extra layers to keep warm.

Looking back since the last newsletter I realized that we have been busy. The PRT session was held with many thanks to Dr. Susan Bryson and Denise Stone. We have talked about the need to reconnect with Dr. Bryson and arrange for a second day of training. It was felt that the first day was a good start but more is needed.

It was great to see those of you who were able to attend the AGM and the joint meeting in August with ECIANS. Although I enjoy the email contact I have with you I much prefer seeing you in person. Lisa Gower tells me that she has been busy making presentations, but that the word is that everything is on hold for the moment.

We met a few weeks ago to continue the work that you helped us with at the AGM on the Early Intervention procedure manual. We spent a considerable amount of time on the section that dealt with Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP). We have heard through the grape vine that Sarah Melanson (we have a bit of an inside track with Sarah) may be presenting her research findings on IFSP's in the province. It will be exciting to hear her results and to have a provincial discussion around a truly core service of early intervention. Although the document is still in draft form and far from complete, if anyone is training new staff and would like to pilot the use of what we have to date we would be pleased to share and we would appreciate feedback.

I was talking to Bernie O'Neil at the Credit Union Charitable Foundation and the cheque is in the mail! We will forward the details of the disbursement as they become clear to us. It is likely that we will have everything sorted out after the EINS Board meeting on November 24, 2007.

February will be here sooner than we like to think and we will be celebrating Early Intervention in our communities. If you have any PR ideas for February that you would like EINS to consider please let us know. We welcome input from you our members.

I wish you a happy holiday season doing the things that bring joy to your heart. Take good care of you and yours. I'll be in touch.

Sincerely, Brenda Putnam, Chair EINS

### ***The Cowboy Boots*** (Anyone who has ever dressed a child will love this)

*Did you hear about the Texas teacher who was helping one of her kindergarten students put on his cowboy boots? He asked for help and she could see why even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on. By the time they got the second boot on, she had worked up a sweat. She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet." She looked, and sure enough, they were. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as, together, they worked to get the boots back on, this time on the right feet. He then announced, "These aren't my boots." She bit her tongue, rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to. Once again she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.*

*No sooner had they gotten the boots off when he said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear 'em". Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry. But she mustered up what grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again. Helping him into his coat, she asked, "Now, where are your mittens?" He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."*

*Congratulations Isabel denHeyer.....*



In June of this year at our AGM, we were pleased to honor Isabel den Heyer the *Barb Boiduk Advocacy Award* in recognition of her dedication and commitment to children and families. We thank you again Isabel for all you have done, not only for children and their

families, but for the profession of early Intervention as a whole. We will miss your contribution to our Early Intervention Nova Scotia, but are very grateful to have had you as long as we did! Thanks again, and many happy, healthy years ahead!!

*“For outstanding devotion of both voice and heart in advocacy and encouragement to families and children.”*



*Toilet Readiness (from IWK info. bulletin)*

- 1) Does she pass urine or have bowel movements at regular times during the day? If so it will be easier to get started toilet training.
- 2) Does she follow simple requests (eg. “come here, sit down”). If so, she will be more likely to follow your directions in toilet training.
- 3) Does she have the words to tell you her needs (eg. “potty”, “peepee” or “poop”)
- 4) Does she let you know if her diaper is soiled or wet? If so, it will be easier to get started.
- 5) Does she know how to pull down her pants easily, and pull them up again? If so, she will be better prepared to make it to the “potty” on time.
- 6) Let your child come to the washroom with you and begin to use appropriate terms around toileting.
- 7) Read stories about toileting.
- 8) When your child attempts to use the potty, make sure her feet are flat on the ground and that she feels secure.
- 9) Notice your child's signs that he may need to use the washroom and suggest he come with you to the bathroom. He will start to connect his signs with using the washroom.
- 10) When you begin training, encourage him to sit for short periods several times a day. Praise every effort!!

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I was packing for my business trip and my three year old daughter was having a wonderful time playing on the bed. At one point she said, "Daddy, look at this," and stuck out two of her fingers.

Trying to keep her entertained, I reached out and stuck her tiny fingers in my mouth and said, "Daddy's gonna eat your fingers." Pretending to eat them, I went back to packing, looked up again and my daughter was standing on the bed staring at her fingers with a devastated look on her face.

I said, "What's wrong, honey?"

She replied fighting back tears, "What happened to my booger?"

*Quick & Easy Bacon & Cheese Dip Recipe*

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>1 pkg. cream cheese<br/>1 ½ c. sour cream<br/>2 c. shredded cheddar<br/>1 ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce<br/>1 pkg. bacon<br/>Cook bacon &amp; crumble.<br/>Mix cream cheese, sour</p> | <p>cream, cheddar and Worcestershire, stir in bacon. Spoon into a bread shell (cut top off and dig out a hole in the centre of a round loaf of bread- save top and cut into squares to be dipped into cheese dip later). Wrap in a piece</p> | <p>of aluminum foil and bake in the oven at 325 for about an hour.<br/><br/>Serve warm with cut up bread pieces. You can cut more bread up if necessary.<br/><br/>Great on a cold day.<br/><br/>Mmmm.....enjoy!</p> |
|--|--|---|

## The Cost of Raising a Child

The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140 for a middle-income family. Talk about sticker shock! That doesn't even touch college tuition. But \$160,140 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into: \$8,896.66 a year, \$741.38 a month, or \$171.08 a week. That's a mere \$24.24 a day! Just over a dollar an hour.

Still, you might think the best financial advice is "Don't have children if you want to be 'rich'." Actually, it is just the opposite. *What do you get for your \$160,140?* Naming rights. First, middle, and last! Glimpses of God every day. Giggles under the covers every night. More love than your heart can hold. Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs. Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warm cookies.

A hand to hold usually covered with jelly or chocolate.

A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites.

Someone to laugh yourself silly with, no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

*For \$160,140, you never have to grow up. You get to:* finger-paint, carve pumpkins, play hide-and-seek, and catch lightning bugs

*You have an excuse to:* keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh, watch Saturday morning cartoons, go to Disney movies, and wish on stars. You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay or Mother's Day, and cards with

backward letters for Father's Day.

*For \$160,140, there is no greater bang for your buck. You get to be a hero just for:*

Retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof,

Taking the training wheels off a bike, removing a splinter, filling a wading pool, coaxing a wad of gum out of hair, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.

*You get a front row seat to history to witness the:*

first step, first word, first bra, first date, and first time behind the wheel.

You get to be immortal. You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren and great grandchildren. You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.

In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there under God. You have all the power to heal a boo-boo, scare away the monsters under the bed, patch

a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits. So one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost. That is quite a deal!!!!!!

*Love & Enjoy your Children & Grandchildren. It's priceless!!!!!!*

## Program News and Updates

**Southwest Early Childhood Intervention** (Yarmouth County) is once again offering service in French, with the recent part-time employ of Early Interventionist, Melissa Dulong. Melissa is a recent graduate of the Mount Saint Vincent University Child and Youth Study Degree, and has experience as a Respite Care Provider. Welcome to Melissa!

Phone: (902) 742-3366  
Fax: (902) 742-1984  
Email: [seci@auracom.com](mailto:seci@auracom.com)  
[www.nsnnet.org/yarmouth](http://www.nsnnet.org/yarmouth)

**Digby & Area Early Intervention Program** wants to advise everyone of the new office location. Their information is as be: Digby & Area Early Intervention Program #19 Victoria Avenue,

Unit #4  
PO Box 129 Weymouth  
Digby County, NS  
B0W 3T0  
*Phone:* 902-837-7315  
*Fax:* 902-837-7130  
*Email:* [deip@ns.aliantzinc.ca](mailto:deip@ns.aliantzinc.ca)

Our part time staff Jean Nicol at **Pictou County Early Intervention** has resigned. We wish the best of luck in her new adventures and thank her for her contribution to early intervention. As of now we haven't hired yet but will be looking for a replacement.

Our recent fundraisers include a calendar with pictures of current and past children and quotes from families as well as monthly prize draws, Lucky Duck Lotto (provincial fundraiser),

donations from Nova Scotia Power Good Neighbor fund (via a family), a Ronald McDonald house Charities grant for our resource library, Kinsmen donation, United Commercial Travellers donation and we are supported yearly by United Way grants and the Pictou County Antique Car Club.

***EINS encourages programs to share fundraising ideas. We can all learn so much from each other. Please remember that our website WWW.EINS.CA is available for you to communicate with one another as well.***





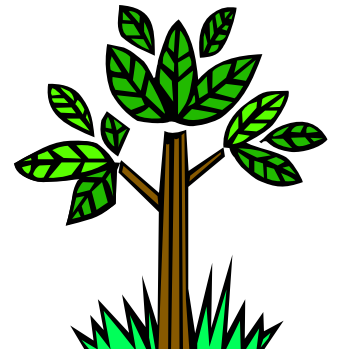

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*"Our greatest fear is not that we are inadequate, but rather, that we are powerful beyond measure."*  
- Nelson Mandela

## Recreation Therapy @ IWK Health Centre

For those of you who are not yet aware of this program, more information can be found at [www.iwk.nshealth.ca](http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca) (click on Care Services, then Recreation Therapy). They are currently offering a series of events such as swimming, paddling and yoga for children with developmental

disabilities. There are online registration forms, or interested persons can contact one of the recreation therapists personally at [andrea.waters@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:andrea.waters@iwk.nshealth.ca) or [Noreen.guptill@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:Noreen.guptill@iwk.nshealth.ca). You can also contact them by phone at (902) 470-6547.



## Two Men

*Two men, both seriously ill, occupied the same hospital room. One man was allowed to sit up in his bed for an hour each afternoon to help drain the fluid from his lungs. His bed was next to the room's only window. The other man had to spend all his time flat on his back. The men talked for hours on end. They spoke of their wives and families, their homes, their jobs, their involvement in the military service, where they had been on vacation.*

*Every afternoon when the man in the bed by the window could sit up, he would pass the time by describing to his roommate all the things he could see outside the window.*

*The man in the other bed began to live for those one hour periods where his world would be broadened and enlivened by all the activity and color of the world outside.*

*The window overlooked a park with a lovely lake. Ducks and swans played on the water while children sailed their model boats. Young lovers walked arm in arm amidst flowers of every color and a fine view of the city skyline could be seen in the distance.*

*As the man by the window described all this in exquisite detail, the man on the other side of the room would close his eyes and imagine*

*the picturesque scene.*

*One warm afternoon the man by the window described a parade passing by.*

*Although the other man couldn't hear the band - he could see it. In his mind's eye as the gentleman by the window portrayed it with descriptive words.*

*Days and weeks passed.*

*One morning, the day nurse arrived to bring water for their baths only to find the lifeless body of the man by the window, who had died peacefully in his sleep. She was saddened and called the hospital attendants to take the body away.*

*As soon as it seemed appropriate, the other man asked if he could be moved next to the window. The nurse was happy to make the switch, and after making sure he was comfortable, she left him alone. Slowly, painfully, he propped*

*himself up on one elbow to take his first look at the real world outside.*

*He strained to slowly turn to look out the window beside the bed.*

*It faced a blank wall. The man asked the nurse what could have compelled his deceased roommate who had described such wonderful things outside this window*

*The nurse responded that the man was blind and could not even see the wall.*

*She said, "Perhaps he just wanted to encourage you."*

*Epilogue:*

*There is tremendous happiness in making others happy, despite our own situations.*

*Shared grief is half the sorrow, but happiness when shared, is doubled. If you want to feel rich, just count all the things you have that money can't buy.*

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*"To be yourself in a world which is trying it's hardest day and night to turn you into something you're not means fighting one of the hardest battles you will ever fight. Never stop fighting."*

Hold This Date! Disability Tax Credit Information Session!

The IWK Pediatric Rehabilitation Service has organized an information Session on the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and related programs. The DTC is a non-refundable tax credit that a person with a qualifying disability or their parent can claim to reduce the amount of income tax he or she has to pay in a year. This will be presented by Lynne Gaucher, a representative from the Canada Revenue Agency.

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS "LUNCH & LEARN" SESSION 12:00-1:30 PM  
 PARENT SESSION 7:00-8:30 PM  
 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14th, 2007

The sessions will be held in the Parker Reception Room at the IWK Health Centre.

Please forward to any individuals you feel would be interested in

attending either of these sessions.

Telehealth sessions may be available. Contact Monique Ridge at [Monique.ridge@iwk.nshealth.ca](mailto:Monique.ridge@iwk.nshealth.ca).



**BENEFITS PLANS**

EINS is pleased to announce that programs now have the option of accessing both a group benefits / insurance plan and a group retirement plan (RRSPs). There are programs accessing both of these options or only one depending on their needs.

*Pam Hinam of Alitude Employee Benefits Solutions* is our broker for both plans. Pam can be reached at 1 888 877 7531 or [pam@employee-benefits.ca](mailto:pam@employee-benefits.ca)

For more information please contact Sarah Melanson at [smmelanson@eastlink.ca](mailto:smmelanson@eastlink.ca)

To kick off Down Syndrome Awareness Week (November 1-7) and to draw attention to the impact genetic screening is making on the Down syndrome population and our society, the NSDSS has started 'Campaign for Down syndrome'.

A news release, as well as more information on the Campaign and events planned can be found on [www.campaignfordownsyndrome.blogspot.com](http://www.campaignfordownsyndrome.blogspot.com)

Please get involved and help make a change!

**Fuel the Care**

Fuel the Care covers travel costs for families traveling between home and hospital when their children need medical care.

Since 2002, more than 12,000 families in Atlantic Canada and New England have been helped.

If you know a child who is a patient and you would like more information about the Fuel the Care program, please call:

**The IWK Health Centre**  
 (902) 470-8076- 4452  
 Or visit [www.irvingoil.com](http://www.irvingoil.com)

## Early Intervention Nova Scotia

### Our Board

Brenda Putnam  
Sarah Melanson  
Jenny Gillis  
Bernie Borden  
Ashley Matthews  
Donna Dexter  
Suzanne McCurdy  
Paula Greene  
Mary Hanington  
Janice Ryan  
Denise Lowe-  
Whynott  
Caroline Gallop  
Barb Shea



We're on the Web!

[www.eins.ca](http://www.eins.ca)

Join online discussion  
panels for  
parents, EI's & more  
([www.eins.ca/forum](http://www.eins.ca/forum))

**E.I.N.S**  
**14 Court Street, Suite**  
**200, Unit 129, Truro,**  
**NS,**  
**B2N 3H7**

Twice in October, I was pleased to see that the Chronicle Herald printed articles about Down syndrome. One article was about a casting call for young people and children with Down syndrome to appear in the movie "The Memory Keepers Daughter". The second article was about the need for balanced information to be given to pregnant women and featured an interview given by Renate Lindeman, president of the Nova Scotia Down Syndrome Society. The unfortunate thing about both articles was the headlines, the first one read – "Down Syndrome Children needed for Halifax-shot made-for-TV movie" and the headline of the second article – "Mom: Don't be so quick to disregard Downs Child".

Five years ago when I was expecting my son neither headline would have offended me and may not even have caught my attention. Today I am proud to be Ian's mom and the fact that the Chronicle Herald chose to highlight the "Down syndrome" before the person on these two stories is troubling. Ian is living with Down syndrome but it does not define him. This is a fact that gets overlooked a lot in the society we live in today; society sees the condition before the diverse little person thriving under it! One of the greatest things about our wonderful Early Interventionists is that they always see our children as just those... children, before any challenges they may have. I am grateful to Jenny Gillis, our Early Interventionist, for all her wonderful support, but her ability see Ian as a little boy first will always be what I cherish most.

Kathleen and Ian's mom – Christine Lane

## Early Childhood Interventionists Association of Nova Scotia

E.C.I.A.N.S. is happy to announce that the Early Childhood Interventionists' Association of Nova Scotia website is up and running. Check out [www.ecians.ca](http://www.ecians.ca) to learn about the latest news!! If there is anything you'd like to see added email [allayne@ecians.ca](mailto:allayne@ecians.ca) or [admin@ecians.ca](mailto:admin@ecians.ca). If you would like to get a professional "ecians" email address, please let us know at the above email addresses and we will get you set up. We look forward to communicating with you and keeping you up to date through our website. Check it out for a current list of ECIAANS Board members, and for all the latest news on what we've been up to! Thanks!

### **About Our Organization (EINS)...**

The Early Intervention Association of Nova Scotia (EINS) is a registered charity administered by a volunteer board of directors. The association was formed in 1996 by parents of children receiving services, board members of existing Early Intervention programs, professionals working within the field and other interested individuals. Members of EINS believed in (and frequently partnered in) the work of Early Intervention Programs in providing family centred services to families of children with special needs, aged birth to 6, in their own homes.

The Association's goals are to provide a voice for Early Intervention issues, to promote public awareness and education about the value of Early Intervention and the value of the children and families served, and to promote professional development in the field of Early Intervention.

In order to accomplish these goals, the Association lends its financial support to professional development projects for Early Intervention staff and to assist with public awareness and education. It also offers financial support to parents who are interested in attending educational opportunities related to their child's needs. The Association raises funds for its annual business through fundraising promotions and the generous support of the Trucker's Association of Nova Scotia.

Thank you for your interest in Early Intervention Nova Scotia!!  
We look forward to sharing our next newsletter with you in the Spring!  
Submissions can be sent to [jennygillis@hotmail.com](mailto:jennygillis@hotmail.com). Thanks!!



## Early Intervention Association of Nova Scotia (EINS)

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October 29, 2007

Honorable Judy Streach  
Minister of Community Services  
Government of Nova Scotia  
P. O. Box 696  
Halifax, NS B3J 2T7

Dear Minister Streach:

On behalf of the Board Chairs of community Early Intervention Programs throughout the Province and the Early Intervention Association of Nova Scotia (EINS), I am requesting a meeting with you in Halifax in November 2007.

We acknowledge your government's commitment to providing stable funding to early intervention services in 2005 through the establishment of the Early Intervention Working Group and the adoption of the recommendations of that group. We wish to work with your government to build on our shared past successes and address some issues related to the implementation of the recommendations adopted from the report of the Working Group on Early Intervention.

The Early Intervention Working Group's most challenging task was the development of a funding formula. In the original letter sent to Minister Morse in the fall of 2004 a request was made for the development of a transparent funding agreement between the Department of Community Services and community Early Intervention boards that reflect the true cost of the service. The resulting funding formula was far from perfect; it was arrived at through a consensus model.

In a meeting with Deputy Tyson, there was considerable discussion around two areas that were considered challenging: caseloads and salaries. An agreement to increase the caseload sizes of Early Interventionists was reached in order for Nova Scotia to fall in the middle range of national caseload sizes. The issue of salaries was deferred; however, it was recognized by all around the table that we had reached a consensus for a starting point for further negotiations. While many Early Intervention Programs perceived this as a negative move, they were encouraged by the Working Group and EINS to welcome the new Service Contract, as there were other positive advances and as a sign of good faith.

The result of the encouragement provided by EINS and the Working Group members was that every Early Intervention program in Nova Scotia signed their Service Contract in the fall of 2006. The funding formula that was a part of the Service Contract was an important consideration in the decision of many of the Programs to sign the Contract - a funding formula that automatically allowed for increases in an Early Intervention program's actual expenses in the areas of rent, utilities, insurance and travel. This Service Contract was supposed to increase stability and provide a negotiation framework. In good faith and with a belief in the power of negotiation the Early Intervention Programs in Nova Scotia signed their Service Contracts with the Department of Community Services.

As Chair of EINS I personally worked hard to persuade Programs of the value of the funding formula and the work of the Early Intervention Working Group. The recent decision by the Department of Community Services to disregard the terms of the transparent funding agreement that was negotiated in good faith, by not providing funds to Programs based on their actual expenses, has led me to write to you to request a meeting to discuss this issue.

It is my understanding that you are receiving information from the Boards of the Early Intervention Programs in Nova Scotia today as well. The Early Intervention Programs of Nova Scotia are united in their request that the Department of Community Services honor their agreement. It is interesting that the Province has recently been negotiating with the Federal government to honor their past agreements and yet have failed to honor the agreements that they have made with Early Intervention Programs in Nova Scotia.

We look forward to discussing next steps as we explore a solution to this challenge. It is our wish that this issue be resolved between the Department and the Early Intervention Programs as quickly as possible. I will look forward to your reply in the near future.

Sincerely,

Brenda Putnam  
Chair

cc: Deputy Minister J. Ferguson, Department of Community Services  
Mr. G. Savoury, Senior Director, Family and Children's Services & Community Supports for Adults, Department of Community Services  
Ms. V. O'Connell, Director, Early Childhood Development Services, Department of Community Services  
Ms. D. Stone, Coordinator, Special Needs Policy & Program Development, Department of Community Services  
Regional Administrators, Department of Community Services  
Early Childhood Specialists, Department of Community Services  
EINS memberships (distributed through newsletter)