

Spring Issue  
March 2007

# Early Intervention Nova Scotia Newsletter

## Useful Websites...

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

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

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

[www.access2.ca](http://www.access2.ca)  
(movie discount info.  
when accompanying  
person with disability.)

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

## Check inside for:

*Facts on inclusion and  
school transition,  
call for nominations  
(Barb Boiduk Award &  
EINS), reviews and  
updates on, funding  
information, parent  
conference and much  
more!*

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

## UPDATE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear EINS Members,

Spring is here, on the calendar at least, brrrrr. Actually it makes for invigorating early morning walks for Tedo and me. Tedo is my four-year-old Shih Tzu. Since I wrote the opening line we've had our Easter storm. Spring in Nova Scotia is so interesting.

In my spare time I have been reading Mary Gordon's book Roots of Empathy (2005) on page 211 she writes "What we have learned from the last few decades of neuroscience and child-development research shines a light on the early years as a pivotal period with exquisite learning opportunities that are unparalleled in the balance of a lifetime. The nurturing of a loving adult does more to foster intellectual competence than any course or program or teacher." If any of you are wondering about the difference you are making or about the importance of the role you play hear May Gordon's words. The power of one in the life of a child should never be underestimated.

We have had two meetings to continue Sarah Melanson's work on the Early Intervention procedure manual. When this project is completed to the best of the ability of the group EINS will give one to each program. This will be a living document that will be open for revision on a yearly basis in much the same way as the Personnel Policies are. It is our hope that this will make the training of new staff easier and that it will increase the consistency of Early Intervention services across the province.

It was delightful to see many of you at the conference in November. I felt like I was at a reunion, a fun reunion not the kind you go to but wished you hadn't. EINS was very fortunate to have the collective wisdom of the conference planning committee and Diana Clyde in organizing Celebrating our Children. Once again we saw the power of collaboration as EINS and the Task Force on Early Intervention at Mount Saint Vincent accomplished a daunting task with great success. Isabel denHeyer as chair kept things running smoothly. The workshops proved to be of interest and value to families of infants and young children with special needs. The families left us with some valuable suggestions for future events. Thanks to all who attended and participated.

We are still waiting for the details of the training program that is being offered in collaboration with the EIBI program to be worked out. This is still tentative but we want you to be aware of the possibility, perhaps in May. It would be excellent if all EI's across the province could attend.

Through connections established by the Antigonish Guysborough Early Childhood Intervention Program EINS has applied for funding from the Credit Union Charitable Foundation Board. We are hopeful for a positive outcome for our efforts.

We are looking forward to the AGM in June. The EINS Board has a meeting on April 24. The plan is to finalize the AGM agenda then and circulate it. We have booked a room at the Holiday Inn Express in Kearney Lake. I know we are tempting the shoppers by having it so close to Bayer's Lake . . . See you in June!

Sincerely,  
Brenda Putnam  
Chair EINS

*The Early Intervention website ([www.eins.ca](http://www.eins.ca)) provides links to many Early Intervention programs within the province. The Technical Resource Centre, a Family and Professional Resource Centre at Kings Regional Rehabilitation Centre, has updated web links for some EI Programs and will update others free of charge. If you would like to update your program's homepage, you can contact Giseline or Jim and they will be happy to make the revisions for you.*

Email: [trc@nsnet.org](mailto:trc@nsnet.org) Web: <http://krcc.nsnet.org>

The Technical Resource Centre  
1349 County Home Road, PO Box 128  
Waterville, Nova Scotia,  
Tel: (902) 538-3103 ext: 112 Fax: (902) 538-7022

## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN.....



In June of 2006 at our AGM, we were pleased to honor a very surprised Brenda Putnam with the Barbara Boiduk Advocacy Award in recognition of her dedication and commitment to children and families. If you have someone you'd like to nominate

for the Barbara Boiduk Advocacy Award, now is the time to do so. Nominations need only consist of the name of the individual you are nominating & a short paragraph explaining the reason for your submission. Please remember the descriptor is:

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

Nominations can be sent to Winnie at:

Allkids3@ns.sympatico.ca

## Using Time-In (from IWK info. bulletin)

In order for your child to learn how to behave, she needs to know when she is behaving well and when she is misbehaving. Removing attention from your child using the time-out method will teach her when she is misbehaving. If you give your child attention when she is behaving the way you want her to, she will learn to behave this way. Young children, like most adults,

enjoy the attention of others.

### **What is time-in?**

Time-in means paying attention to your child as well as letting him know when he behaves the way you want him to. You may attend to him by giving him a brief pat or touch, make a comment such as “I like the way you are sitting so nicely in your chair” or looking at him

and smiling when he looks at you. Your child needs to get the message, either verbally or non-verbally, that you notice him and are interested in what he is doing (e.g., “You’re hugging your bear”). You can also praise him specifically for good behavior. Use time in as frequently as you can. The more you do, the more your child will feel good about himself.

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*“To love what you do  
and feel that it  
matters...how could  
anything be more fun?”*

## Quick & Easy Bits & Bites Recipe

1 box Shreddies  
1 box Cheerios  
1 Box of Goldfish crackers  
1 jar of peanuts  
1 bag of stick pretzels  
Dump all into a large roasting pan & mix.



In a measuring cup, mix together one cup of oil, a very generous shake of seasoning salt, onion powder, garlic powder and Worcestershire sauce (depending on how much flavor you want!). Pour oil mixture over the dry ingredients

in the roaster and stir until blended.

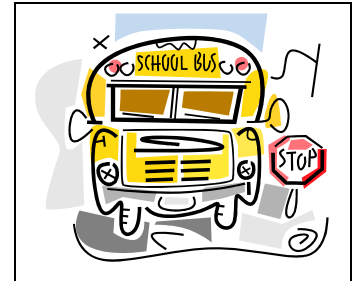
Bake at 200 for about an hour. Remember to stir it frequently so it doesn't stick or burn.

Really yummy and something kids really like helping with as well!

## Tips for a Successful School Transition

- Prepare for your participation in a program planning meeting by jotting down any questions or concerns you may have in advance. Some questions may include what a typical day will be like for your child, whether or not he or she will be expected to meet certain outcomes or who will be available during lunch hour and at morning drop off.
- Don't be afraid to speak your mind and let others know what your hopes and goals are for your child.
- Share your child's strengths and needs, what he likes, hates, motivators, etc.
- Be able to identify things that have worked well for your child and your family in the past.
- Remember that you are, and always will be, the expert on your child.
- Outline any additional information that may be relevant in the planning process (ie- a move, illness, etc.).
- Follow-up on your child's progress. You have a right to know how they are doing and ask questions.
- Practice calm, assertive advocacy!
- Useful information can be found on the HRSB website at [www.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.ednet.ns.ca)

A document entitled "The Program Planning Process: A Guide for Parents" is available through the school board as well.



*"The time to relax is when you don't have time for it."*

*- Sydney J. Harris*

## Ronald McDonald House Charities

"RMHC is proud of the support to children right across the country that our granting program provides," explains Rem Langan, President, RMHC. "And it's important to note that these grants are possible because of the support we receive from McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Limited who pay all of the general and administrative costs of RMHC in Canada so that 100 cents of every dollar donated go directly to RMHC benefiting children in need and their families." Antigonish-Guysborough Program has applied and received substantial funding. Pictou, Queens and Inverness- Richmond Programs are in the process of applying as well. Programs are encouraged to visit their website [www.rmhc.ca](http://www.rmhc.ca) more information.






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*"If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you."*  
- Winnie the Pooh, on true friendship

## Personnel Policies

As all Early Intervention Programs are aware, the Early Intervention Personnel Policies have been completed and circulated to all programs. These policies are linked to the new Standards and Guidelines from the province which is outlined in your Service Agreement. Complete documents can be found

at [www.eins.ca/mission.cfm](http://www.eins.ca/mission.cfm). Programs are open to enhance the policies for the benefit of their employees.

We hope that you are finding these useful - should you find any sections unclear or would like us to review, please contact Sarah at [smmelanson@eastlink.ca](mailto:smmelanson@eastlink.ca).

We will be meeting before the AGM to look at any potential revisions in order for an revised edition to be available by the AGM. We want to ensure these remain current and reflective of our programs, please pass along anything you would like us to consider... (even typos!!). Thanks!

## Parent Conference Review & Follow-up

The Celebrating Our Children Conference sponsored by EINS and the Centre of Excellence for Children and Adolescents with Special Needs at Mount Saint Vincent University was held at the Mount in November. It was attended by over 200 parents and professionals, 15 exhibitors and 25 presenters. The purpose of the weekend conference was to give parents of young children with special needs information on a variety of topics recommended by pre-conference parent surveys reports. The parents' evaluations at the end of the conference indicated that the weekend was a success.

On Saturday participants attended keynote addresses and speaker sessions on a variety of topics. In between sessions, there were exhibits and vendor stalls to visit hosted by agencies and organizations offering services and support to families. Speakers and exhibitors contributed material to conference binders for parents. Sunday morning an informal brunch gave parents the opportunity to meet each other for a few leisurely hours. The Saturday morning keynote speaker, Dr. Wayne MacKay examined the challenges and promises of inclusive education by explaining the legal background of education law and the importance of all children having feelings of "belonging" in school. Parents appreciated his clarity and indicated in the evaluation that it gave them a better understanding of the educational system. The sessions on transitioning to school and developing individual education plans provided additional insights into the education system in a unique way. Seeing the transition-to-school meetings acted out by "real" early interventionists, principals, educators and parents made a strong impact on the audience. "It was fun"; "I never thought about what happens from the school's point of view

before" and "Now I know what questions to ask and what to expect and why" were some of the reactions from parents. Other sessions drew similar responses. Parents were particularly satisfied with sessions by presenters who themselves were parents of children with special needs. They were perceived as being true experts and the audience felt comfortable asking questions. The sessions rated as the most useful were the same topics identified as being most important in the pre-conference parent survey: behavioural challenges, parenting strategies and navigating the school system. Overall sessions were consistently rated as excellent or very good by most participants with a few ranked good on the evaluation.

Mr. Danny Graham's afternoon keynote address about his own experience as a father inspired the audience and as one parent said "...he really did celebrate our children with us". He bought attention to the joys of parenting and to ways to meet challenges with understanding, respect and dignity. The conference closed with a Sunday brunch where suggestions were made for future actions. One suggestion was to make this conference an annual event and holding regional conferences. For

parents living outside the metro area, making arrangements for child care, accommodation and travel is costly and time-consuming even with financial support. Providing child care on site was also recommended. (Conference organizers were unable to do so because of licensing requirements, insurance and cost.) The conference was a wonderful opportunity for parents to meet each other and share stories. They would like more opportunities to meet and support each other. Speakers and parents made it clear that they considered Celebrating Our Children a great success which should be repeated. The need for such a gathering will remain in the future as each new group of parents reaches out for the information and expertise that will help them live well.

Questions for future planning are:

- who should organize regional conferences?
- how should such events be funded?
- how can organizers reach parents most effectively?

A few conference binders are available from Early Intervention Programs and are a valuable resource to parents of young children with special needs. The binders contain the conference program, the list of conference contributors and information on the sessions that were held. The conference committee would like to extend a thank you to all those who helped to make the conference such a success and hope that other conferences will be held in the future.

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*"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."*  
- Thomas Edison

### Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL)

The Canadian Association for Community Living is a Canada-wide association of family members and others working for the benefit of persons of all ages who have an intellectual disability.

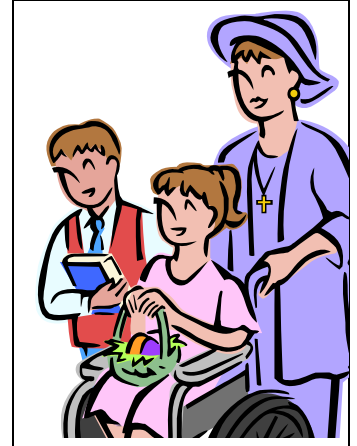
Founded in 1958 by parents of children with intellectual disabilities who wanted supports and services within the community instead of in institutions, CACL has become one of Canada's ten largest charitable

organizations, and has grown into a federation of 10 provincial and three territorial associations comprising of 420 local associations and over 40,000 members.

It is estimated that among children and youth in Canada, 5-7% have disabilities. Children and youth with disabilities are loved and valued by their family members, just like other Canadian children. As CACL meets

with families across the country, there is a clear message. Children with disabilities are not the problem. The problem is a society that does not always support and include all children and youth, and their families. For more information on CACL visit [www.cacl.ca](http://www.cacl.ca) or via mail or phone:

**Nova Scotia Association for Community Living**  
22-24 Dundas Street,  
Suite 2  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia  
B2Y 4L2



*"Although the world is full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it."*

*- Helen Keller*

## Early Intervention Association of Nova Scotia

Save the date!

The 2007 EINS AGM will be held on  
Friday, June 8th

Location: Halifax area  
More Details to Follow

If you would like to become a member of Early Intervention Nova Scotia or know someone who would, we will be accepting nominations at our AGM in June 2007. Please let us know!

*"Anyone who proposes to do good must not expect people to roll stones out of his way, but must accept his lot calmly if they even roll a few more upon it."*

*- ALBERT SCHWEITZER*

Our Christmas Gift- by Suzanne Maxwell-McCurdy

## **Early Intervention Nova Scotia**

### Our Board

Brenda Putnam  
Sarah Melanson  
Jenny Gillis  
Isabel denHeyer  
Winnie Hutchison  
Donna Dexter  
Suzanne McCurdy  
Paula Greene  
Mary Hanington  
Kim Kienapple  
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**

Caleb McCurdy can barely contain himself when he and his sister watch the movie Madagascar. He wiggles and squirms in his chair until the scene in which the song "I like to Move it" comes on; then he goes CRAZY- dancing, jumping, singing! An enthusiastic, but relatively normal reaction for most 5 year olds. Caleb, however, has had the additional challenge of hemiplegic cerebral palsy, which affects the right side of his body, particularly his right hand.

Caleb was born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2001 and has been involved with Early Intervention since January 2003. Our interventionist, Ronda Bagnell, has been at the center of it all- home visits, trips to the CP Clinic, providing us with valuable information and practical tips and activities to help Caleb develop his movement and motor skills. Little things, such as pulling on his socks and mittens, dressing and undressing himself, and holding a cup with both hands are huge accomplishments at our house. He has always been a happy-go-lucky child, which makes working with him so rewarding. (We think he has a future as an entertainer!)

This September, Caleb heads to school, so our time working with Ronda will come to an end. But I am confident that if there were ever a time we needed more advice or had a problem, we could contact our Early Intervention office and help would be there.

## **Early Childhood Interventionists Association of Nova Scotia**

The Early Childhood Interventionists Association of Nova Scotia (E.C.I.A.N.S.) held its first AGM on Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. Over 40 early interventionists and program coordinators were in attendance and the time was

well spent. The very first E.C.I.A.N.S. Board of Directors was also elected (shown in photo). We look forward to watching this dynamic group move onward and upward!! Thanks to all Involved for your devotion!



### ***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 Fall!  
Submissions can be sent to [jennygillis@hotmail.com](mailto:jennygillis@hotmail.com). Thanks!!