

»»» CELEBRATING FAMILY «««



# STRONG Start DO

Online Newsletter



## WELCOME MESSAGE

As we step into this new year, we want to take a moment to celebrate the heart of our community: families. From the laughter shared during bedtime stories to the small victories in everyday routines, the support and love families provide are the foundation of a child's growth and learning. In this issue, we'll explore ways to nurture those special connections and share tips for enhancing the precious moments spent together as a family.

Family time in the qathet region at this time of year can be quite exciting. These months often bring a mix of winter's chill and spring's warmth often within days of each other. Whether it's snow, rain, or sunshine, our outdoor events—like those on February 4th at Palm Beach and March 4th at the OLC—are sure to be filled with fun and adventure. Alongside the unpredictable weather, these months are also filled with celebrations of love and family, and, of course, the start of Kindergarten registration in February—a big milestone for many families.

With so much happening, it's a wonderful time to come together, embrace the changing seasons, and celebrate the joy of family connections. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and celebrating your family with you.

The StrongStart Team: Raun, Paula, Kate, Kristal & Danielle

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For more information on Early Learning in qathet School District, please visit our website at <https://www.sd47.bc.ca/page/62/early-learning>

# PROGRAM INFO

## STRONGSTART GO!

StrongStart GO is an outdoor StrongStart program that takes place in a variety of locations around the qathet Regional District. We are excited about providing opportunities to connect with one another and with nature as we explore and learn together outside.

Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Texada @ Elementary School - 2007 Waterman Ave.	Mondays - every second week	10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Lund Community Centre - 9656 Larson Rd.	Mondays - every second week	10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Edgehill Elementary Outdoor Class - 7312 Abbotsford St.	Tuesday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Lindsay Park - 7179 Cranberry St.	Tuesday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Sunset Park - 6211 Lois St.	Wednesday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Willingdon Beach Park - 6911 Abbotsford St.	Wednesday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Lang Bay @ Fish Hatchery - 10556 Sunshine Coast Hwy	Thursday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Grief Point Park - Hernando Ave.	Thursday - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM
Larry Gouthro Park - 4726 Manson Ave.	Fridays - every second week	9:30 to 11:30 AM

### Our large events will be:

- February 4th - All StrongStart Centres at Palm Beach
- March 4th - All StrongStart Centres at The OLC



**StrongStart GO**  
Getting Outside with qathet School District

**STRONGSTART CLOSED**  
**MARCH 15-30**

## STRONGSTART CENTRES

StrongStart is a free drop-in program offered to families with children ages zero to five years old. Qualified early childhood educators lead learning activities and share valuable information with parents on child development and education in a safe, friendly, child-centered environment

Elementary School	Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Edgehill Elementary	7312 Abbotsford St.	Closed for Construction	
Henderson Elementary	5506 Willow Ave.	Monday Tuesday - Friday	2:30 pm - 5:30 pm 8:45 am - 11:45 am
Kelly Creek Elementary	2345 Zilinsky Rd.	Monday - Wednesday, Friday Thursday	8:30 am - 11:30 am 11:30 am - 2:30 pm
Westview Elementary	3900 Selkirk Ave.	Monday - Friday	8:45 am - 11:45 am
StrongStart GO!	Texada, Lund, Powell River	Monday-Friday	Visit our <a href="#">webpage</a> for locations and schedule

Please note that the StrongStart centres follow the qathet School District calendar and will be closed during all school closures.

For up to date information on StrongStart schedules, programs, and special events please visit our [website](#)

**Sure, it might get messy, but letting little hands help in the kitchen can make dinnertime feel less like a chore and more like a memory-making moment!**

## ➤➤➤ PANCAKE TACOS

### PANCAKE INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cup milk
- 1 large egg or 2 tablespoons applesauce
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Cooking spray

### BUILD THE FRUIT TACO

- Blueberries
- Raspberries
- Strawberries sliced
- Greek yogurt vanilla flavor
- Semi-sweet chocolate chips
- Mango
- Bananas
- Kiwi
- Whipped cream



### MAKE THE PANCAKES

- Mix up pancakes and cook on griddle or frying pan
- After pancakes are done have fun making up tacos

## ➤➤➤ BUILD YOUR OWN PIZZA

**Building your own pizzas can be as simple or as fancy as you want it to be.**

### 1. Choose a Crust

- Store-bought dough
- Biscuits
- Hoagies
- English muffins
- Flatbread

### 2. Choose a Sauce

- Marinara
- Alfredo
- BBQ
- Cheese
- Pesto

### 3. Choose a Cheese

- Cheddar
- Mozzarella
- Parmesan

### 4. Choose the Meat

- Pepperoni
- Canadian bacon
- Chicken

### 5. Choose your toppings

- Pineapple
- Fresh basil
- Tomatoes
- Olives
- Onions
- Parsley
- Mushrooms
- Bell peppers

### 6. Cook it

- Place individual pizzas on a baking sheet or pizza stone.
- Put the baking sheet in the oven and bake until cooked or heated through.



**EAT & ENJOY!!!**



➤➤➤ Storytelling is an important part of family life. Family stories connect us through shared experiences with living family members and family history. Family stories are part of everyday conversation, even if they're just brief accounts of past experience.

Pages 57 and 58 of the BC Early Learning Framework share a Telling Stories activity that can help to foster a sense of belonging and connection to roots and culture.

For more ideas about sharing family stories click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)

For more information about the benefits of family stories for children click [HERE](#).

Try the online [Let's Play: Activities for Families](#) handbook. Available in many different languages.



## ➤➤➤ STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

You don't need to be a master storyteller to delight your child with a story.

- Try telling a personal meaningful story or something funny from your own childhood.
- Tell your child a story about themselves, like the story of their birth and how much you were looking forward to meeting them, or things they loved when they were little.
- Share about their culture and family members who were important to you.

Involve your child in the story through questions like, "What do you think happened next?" or "How do you think that felt?"

It's okay for children to interrupt stories and ask questions. There's no right or wrong way, and this supports the development of self-esteem. **Just relax, have fun, and go with the flow!**

**Find this activity and more on the Government of BC online resource:**

[Let's Play! Activities for Families](#)

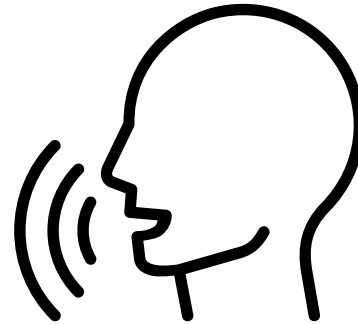
# WORD OF THE MONTH

By Kate

In each publication, the StrongStart team will share a new word to learn in ʔayʔajuθəm (ayajuthem). Ayajuthem is the language of the Tla-amin Nation. In February, we want to share:

ʔətʰ jɛʔajɛ

**my family**



As a school district we have a responsibility to create the conditions that will provide the best quality of education for every student to succeed in school and life. Increasing our knowledge of ʔayʔajuθəm (ayajuthem) is one way for us to show how we value all students and are committed to building strong relationships moving forward.

## >>> DID YOU KNOW?

By Danielle

According to *Discover the Forest*, "The average American child can recognize 1,000 corporate logos, but can't identify 10 plants or animals native to his or her own region."



There is a pair of Steller's jays that nest in a big Douglas fir in my backyard, and I have been watching them year after year and have wondered if they are the same pair. Like other creatures and birds, Steller's jays often form long-term pair bonds and nests are built by both members of the pair.

**Try looking for these easy to spot birds the next time you are exploring the great outdoors!**

### Steller's jay

Listen to ʔayʔajuθəm name: kʷiškʷiʃ

(First Voices, 2023)

**FirstVoices** is an internationally recognized online platform for Indigenous communities to share and promote their languages, oral cultures and linguistic histories. To learn more visit

<https://www.firstvoices.com/tlaamin/kids>





## FAMILY

### ➤➤➤ HUG FROM ME TO YOU

Tune of "Mary had a little lamb"  
It's nice to get to a hug from you,  
Hug from you, Hug from you.  
It's nice to get a hug from you,  
So, let's give one right now.  
(Hug a friend)

### ➤➤➤ FAMILIES

Some families are large,  
(spread arms out wide)  
Some families are small  
(bring arms close together)  
But I love my family, best of all!  
(cross arms over chest)

### ➤➤➤ IF YOU LOVE ME AND YOU KNOW IT

Tune of "If your happy and you know it"  
If you love me and you know it, Clap your hands.  
If you love me and you know it, Clap your hands.  
If you love me and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it.  
If you love me and you know it, Clap your hands.

Other Verses:  
Say "I Love you"  
Blow me a kiss  
Give me a hug

### ➤➤➤ I LOVE MOMMY

Tune of "Frere Jacques"

I love Mommy, I love Mommy.  
Yes I do; yes I do.  
And my mommy loves me,  
Yes, my mommy loves me,  
Loves me too; loves me too.

Change Mommy to Daddy, Brother,  
Sister, etc.

### ➤➤➤ MY FAMILY

If you peek into my room at night  
(stand on toes as if peeking)  
My family you will see  
(nod head)  
They kiss my face and tuck me in  
tight,  
(blow kiss)  
Why? Because they love me!  
(hug yourself)



# GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

## »»» FORT BUILDING

building forts with your family is a wonderful way to connect and enjoy creating something together.



## »»» WINTER NATURE WALK

Go for a walk and explore the winter landscape. Collect pinecones, twigs, and leaves, or spot animal tracks in the snow.

**Hunt:** Create a list of a certain number of easy items for toddlers to find, then go on a walk to find them. These can be physical items – a blade of grass, a twig, a stone – or things for them to point out e.g. a road sign, an animal.

# SNUGGLE UP AND READ

Check out one of these great books!

Ask for them at the library or just click to listen to the story on Youtube.



We Are Family



I Love Us!

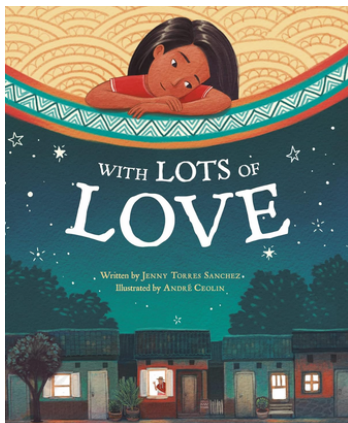
A Book about Family



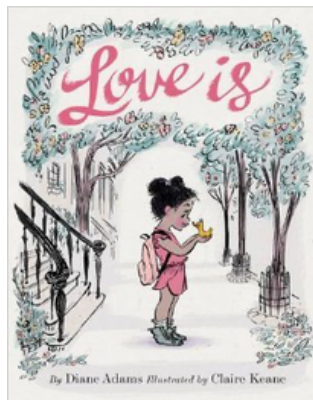
My Family, Your Family.



Love Makes a Family.



With Lots of Love



Love Is



All Are Welcome



## ➤➤➤ ONLINE RESOURCES

- Click [HERE](#) to check out a great website full of ideas for celebrating families this month.
- For more BC family resources click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).



### **Families are wonderfully unique!**

Here are a few articles that provide information about having age-appropriate conversations with children about the diversity of families.

[The Changing Face of American Families](#)

[How to Help Children Understand Diverse Families](#)

[Families Come in All Shapes and Sizes](#)



## ➤➤➤ SALAD SPINNER SPIN ART INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Open the salad spinner.
2. Put the cut paper or coffee filter inside the salad spinner.
3. Squirt paint onto the coffee filter/paper (It works best if you squirt it in several spots inside of the coffee filter instead of just in the center).
4. Close the lid.
5. Spin for a few minutes.
6. Open it and see how it looks. If it needs more colors, squeeze more paint, put the lid on and spin some more.
7. Remove it from the salad spinner and lay it out to dry.
8. Repeat!

*For a little extra fun mix it up with light and heavy objects, rocks, leaves*



# SPINNING AROUND WITH OUR FAMILY AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Have you ever noticed your child enjoying activities like spinning around until they're dizzy, rolling down a hill, spinning wheels on toy cars, or watching balls roll down a ramp? These activities are part of what's called "rotational play" or a "rotational schema." This type of play helps build your child's spatial awareness, balance, and coordination. Schemas are repeated patterns of action, behavior or play that help children understand the world around them.

## ➤➤➤ TIPS TO ENJOY ROTATIONAL PLAY SAFELY AND EFFECTIVELY

- **Start Slow:** (depending on your child) Help guide your child to hold on to the equipment. Begin by asking your child, "Would you like me to spin you once or twice?" This encourages them to use their words to express what they want.
- **Engage and Observe:** Slowly spin your child and stop to make eye contact, asking if they would like to be spun again. This helps them feel secure and understood and also creates space for them to use their language and communication skills.
- **Language Development:** Once your child gets the hang of spinning, use this opportunity to practice their language skills. Ask them how many spins they would like. You can also use this as an opportunity to count together!
- Remember, it's important to **ask for your child's consent** before engaging in any play activity. Always check if they are comfortable and willing to participate.



**EXTRA! EXTRA!****2025/2026 School Registrations  
are now open!****IMPORTANT!**

**AGE (Kindergarten)**  
Children born in 2020

**APPLY ONLINE THROUGH MyEd**  
Information & instructions  
available at [sd47.bc.ca](http://sd47.bc.ca)

**PRIORITY DEADLINES**

- Kindergarten French Immersion **Feb 28**
- Elementary Schools for 'in catchment' enrolment **March 31**
- Elementary Schools for 'out of catchment' enrolment **March 31**
  - *\*subject to availability, spot to be confirmed no later than May 31st.*

Go to [sd47.bc.ca](http://sd47.bc.ca) for registration instructions, information on your catchment, and transportation eligibility.

**THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START:**

o What is **MyEd**? The MyEd BC Student Family Portal is another way in which students and their family can access information about their educational program. If you do not have a MyEd account yet, please note that you **MUST** be on a laptop, computer, or iPad to create one. You cannot create an account on your phone.

o Your first choice on MyEd must be your catchment area school. Please refer to this [Catchment Area Boundaries page](#) to determine your child's school.

o Your second choice on MyEd is your desired school, which can be indicated in the Comment field on the 'Submit Tab' (final step before submitting application on MyEd).

▪ *Please note: Students who attend a school outside of their catchment area are not eligible for transportation or transportation assistance.*

The district is hosting a **Kindergarten Registration** event at Edgehill Elementary (for all families, not just Edgehill catchment families) on **February 25th at 3pm-6pm** in the library if they would like to learn more, ask any questions, get support with registration.



# JOIN US FOR AN ASSEMBLY SHOWCASE!

Families with children ages 3 & 4 are invited to attend special elementary school assemblies as a way to get a snapshot experience of school culture while enjoying student showcases.



## ASSEMBLY DATES:

January 22nd @ 1:40 PM - Kelly Creek

January 23rd @ 2:00 PM - Westview

January 30th @ 11:15 AM - James Thomson

February 7th @ 9:05 AM - Henderson

February 26th @ 9:30 AM - Texada

February 28th @ 11:30 AM - Edgehill

No registration is required for these events, but guests are asked to check-in when they arrive to ensure that they receive the VIP experience. Visit [www.sd47.bc.ca](http://www.sd47.bc.ca) for more information.

# READY, SET, LEARN:

# PLAY DATES



*Families with children ages 3&4 are invited to join us for a fun morning of stories, centres, snack, and games. Get a little taste of Henderson and meet some of the incredible staff who make up the Early Learning and Kindergarten team at Henderson.*



**February 28th**  
**10:00-11:30am**



**Highlights:**  
Games in the Gym  
Giveaways  
Centres in the Library  
Story with the Kindergarten teacher

