

>>> FEBRUARY <<<



STRONGStart DO

Discover Online



THE LOVE OF FAMILY

WELCOME MESSAGE

In the tapestry of life, there is a thread that weaves us together, creating a beautiful mosaic of love, support, and shared experiences - that thread is family. It serves as the unbreakable tie that connects us, stitching together the fabric of our lives with the strength of kinship. Just as a skilled artisan selects the finest threads to create a masterpiece, so too do our collective moments, memories, and shared laughter form a masterpiece that is our family.

This month our StrongStart newsletter celebrates all types of families and the collective stories that make your tapestry. We hope that the activities, resources, and recipes inside will spark some new learning and memories that will become woven into your story.

If you would like to expand your circle and share some experiences with other families, we invite you to come visit us Tuesday, February 6th at DA Evans park. Our "family" of StrongStart facilitators are always ready to welcome you in and share some moments together whether that be outside in a park or inside at one of our centres.

Raun Rainbow, Principal of Early Learning and Child Care & Danielle, Kate, Kristal, and Paula, the StrongStart Facilitators

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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! (FORMERLY SD47 ORCA)

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.

2023/2024 Program Details and Schedule:

Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Texada Elementary	Every Second Monday	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Lund	Every Second Monday	10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Willingdon Beach	Every Second Wednesday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Music Academy	Every Second Wednesday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Lang Bay Fish Hatchery	Every Thursday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Larry Gouthro Park	Every Second Friday	9:30 am - 11:30 am
Sunset Park	Every Second Friday	9:30 am - 11:30 am

*All StrongStart programs follow the school calendar and will be closed on statutory holidays, Winter, Spring, Summer Breaks, SD47 Pro-D Days, and the last Wednesday of every month.

The district wide StrongStart GO day is Feb. 6th at DA Evans Park from 9:30 to 11:30.

StrongStart 
Getting Outside with SD47

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

StrongStart Hours and Locations

Elementary School	Location	Days Open	Hours of Operation
Edgehill Elementary	7312 Abbotsford St.	Tuesday & Friday Wednesday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Henderson Elementary	5506 Willow Ave.	Monday Tuesday - Friday	11:45 am - 2:45 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, Tuesday, Thursday	8:45 am - 11:45 am
StrongStart GO!	Texada, Lund, Powell River	Monday, Wednesday-Friday & the first Tuesday of every month	Visit our webpage for locations and schedule

*All StrongStart programs follow the school calendar (starting the second week of September) and will be closed on statutory holidays, Winter, Spring, Summer Breaks, SD47 Pro-D Days, and the last Wednesday of every month. The first Tuesday of every month will only have the mobile StrongStart GO program running.

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

LOVE OF FAMILY

Shared by Paula

*ENJOY COOKING AS A FAMILY,
WHEN KIDS HELP MAKE A MEAL THEY FEEL AS IF THEY HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING BIG.
THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED SOMETHING THAT EVERYONE WILL ENJOY TOGETHER.*

*THIS IS A GREAT MEAL TO BRING TO
OTHERS*



BAKED SPAGHETTI

- 1 16 oz package spaghetti
- 1 26 oz jar spaghetti sauce
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 5 tbsp butter, softened
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

1. Cook spaghetti according to package directions. Drain and set aside.
2. In a large bowl or stand mixer, whisk the eggs, Parmesan cheese, salt and butter.
3. Add spaghetti noodles to egg mixture and mix well.
4. Place half of the spaghetti mixture in a large greased baking dish.
5. Top with a very thin layer of ricotta cheese, sauce and mozzarella cheese.
6. Repeat layers.
7. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 15-20 minutes longer or until cheese is melted and bubbly. This meal freezes well.

<https://www.northcarolinacharm.com>



MAKING BUTTER WITH KIDS



YOU WILL NEED:

- Jar or container with a tight fitting lid
- Heavy cream
- Salt (optional)

Making homemade butter is pretty simple. You can use a glass container, but with little kids helping I highly recommend a plastic container. Just make sure the lid is on securely before giving it to your kids. Pour some cream into your container and add some salt if you like the taste of salted butter. How much cream you use depends on the size of your container and how much butter you'd like to make.

Tightly close your container and give it too your child to shake. It will take about 7-10 minutes of shaking before the butter forms so your kids will want to take turns shaking. It will take 7-10 minutes of shaking. At this point you will be left with liquid that has separated from the butter. Drain the liquid off and stir your butter. so yummy!

FAMILY TREE EXPLORATION

By Danielle



➤➤➤ As children develop a sense of identity and belonging, they can become curious about who they are in the context of their ancestors, extended family and the people who are very important to them.

Pages 49 and 50 of the BC Early Learning Framework share a Family Tree exploration activity that can help to foster this sense of connection to roots and culture. Each family is unique and diverse and there are all kinds of ways to include special people in a family tree.

Here are some [more ideas](#).

The [Let's Play: Activities for Families](#) handbook is available online in:

- [English \(PDF\)](#)
- [French \(Français\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Arabic \(العربية\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Chinese \(Simplified Chinese - 简体中文\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [German \(Deutsch\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Korean \(한국어\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Persian \(فارسی\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Punjabi \(ਪੰਜਾਬੀ\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Spanish \(Español\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [Tagalog \(PDF\)](#)
- [Vietnamese \(Tiếng Việt\) \(PDF\)](#)

[FIND IT BY CLICKING HERE](#)



Family Tree

What

At an early stage, children are eager to establish a sense of belonging in their world. A child's first words will often identify words or names for their siblings, parents, guardians, or care providers. As children become more confident in their abilities, and develop their individual personalities, they become increasingly aware of their similarities and differences with their peers.

This Family Tree exploration is a wonderful way to nurture a child's sense of belonging and identity as well as learn more about their family lineage and culture. It is also a simple way of exploring diversity between family units and ways of being.

1 Create the Environment

- The concept of "Family" has many ways of presenting itself. Introduce the idea by talking about your family, looking at family photos together, or reading a story about families.
- Talk with your child about different emotions that may arise within a family (e.g., a sibling might feel sad about a broken toy, an auntie might feel loved when getting a hug).

2 Explore your Family Tree

- Place images of family members/caregivers on paper or poster-board and begin making your family tree, starting with the child in the centre. Add images of grandparents, uncles, aunts, partners, cousins, or siblings. Do the same for caregivers.
- Try making your family tree resemble an actual tree by placing images on cut-out leaves or use real leaves to mount photos. Images might be connected by a line, string, or stick. This is a good way of visually showing the connection between family members and loved ones.

Why

Through this experience, children will

- Develop self-confidence, a sense of belonging, self-expression, and diversity
- Enhance communication, language, and literacy skills
- Develop creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills



How

You can play this activity with your child in various ways; however, it is best to "know your audience." Adapt to your child's individual needs, such as using personal photos, drawings, or by saying or writing names.

Try using the images in guessing games (i.e. guess the person's name or other things about them).

Children who aren't yet talking can match pictures to people who are close by. Rather than having your child repeat or say the names, ask your child, "Where is Daddy?" and have your child go to, look for, or point towards a person.

Try drawing images of family members instead of using pictures. You can also add individual family information under each image (where they were born, their favourite food, hobbies).

Children who are still learning the names of family members or caregivers can look at photos. Laminate the images (try using either laminate, packing tape, or plastic page protector sleeves) and place pictures on a key ring or in a box or stack. Names can be added on the front or back of photos. Talk about the images regularly to help your child become familiar with them.

If your child attends a classroom setting, consider inviting your child to share their family tree or photos with their friends. This may open great dialogue between peers.

Read a book with your child about different types of families. Here are suggestions:

- *A Family Is a Family*, by Sara O'Leary
- *The Family Book*, by Todd Parr

Where

This experience can be explored anywhere; however, it is ideally played at a table where you can assist in piecing together the family tree. It is best explored one on one or within a small group.

When

This activity can occur at any time of the day.



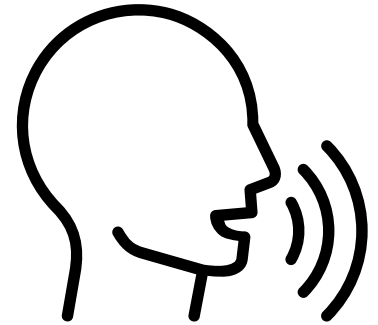
WORD OF THE MONTH

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:

ʔət^θ jεʔaje

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, a website for tweens (kids 10 to 14), developed through a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service and the Ad Council, “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, birds often form long-term pair bonds and nests are built by both of the members of the pair. Steller’s jays are among the birds that form these bonds. This inquisitive bird is easy to find! Look for bird families the next time that you are exploring the great outdoors.

Steller’s jay

ʔayʔajuθəm name: kʷiškʷiš

(First Voices, 2023)

To hear the ʔayʔajuθəm word [CLICK HERE](#).

FirstVoices

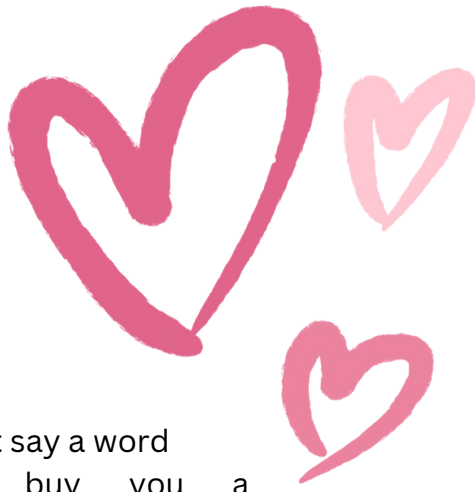


FirstVoices is a suite of web-based tools and services designed to support Indigenous people engaged in language archiving, language teaching and culture revitalization. www.firstvoices.com

For more information about the Steller’s jay [CLICK HERE](#)

FAMILY

Shared by Kate



MOCKING BIRD

Hush little baby, don't say a word
 Papa's going to buy you a
 mockingbird.
 If that mocking bird won't sing,
 Papa's going to buy you a diamond
 ring
 If that diamond ring turns brass,
 Papa's going to buy you a looking
 glass.
 If that looking glass gets broke,
 Papa's going to buy you a Billy goat
 If that Billy goat won't pull,
 Papa's going to buy you a cart and bull
 If that cart and bull turn over,
 Papa's going to buy you a dog named
 Rover
 If that dog named Rover won't bark,
 Papa's going to buy you a horse and
 cart
 If that horse and cart falls down,
 You'll still be the sweetest little baby
 in town

HOME

Here is a nest for a robin.
 Here is a hive for a bee.
 Here is a hole for the rabbit;
 And here is a house for me!



GRANDMA'S HOUSE



Sung to: "Over the River and Through the Woods"

Over the river and through the woods
 To Grandma's house we go.
 The car knows the way
 To go today
 To Grandma's house. Hoo-ray ay!

Over the river and through the woods
 To Grandma's house we go.
 To play with the toys
 And make lots of noise
 And give Grandma a hug!



FAMILIES



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

GRANDPARENTS



Tune of "Take me out to the ballgame"
 Let's go see our grandparents,
 Take us there for a while.
 Mommy and Daddy both need a break.
 We'll play games and we'll stay up real late!
 Oh, we want to thank our grandparents
 For all the things that they do,
 So it's time.. to.. say you're the best
 And that we love you!

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Shared by Paula

➤➤➤ HIDE AND SEEK



THIS IS A FAVORITE AMONG ALL CHILDREN (AND ADULTS) IT SPARKS A SENSE OF ADVENTURE AND IS JUST SO FUN. MAYBE TRY HIDE AND SEEK IN THE DARK ADDING SOME FLASHLIGHTS



➤➤➤ WHEELBARROW PUZZLE WALK



Take your average Wheelbarrow race to the next level by having your child complete a puzzle in this brilliant idea from [Stir The Wonder](#). Set-up a wooden puzzle board and scatter the pieces around a room. Grab your child's ankles (or hips to make it a bit easier for little ones) and hold them up so they can walk on their hands to collect them. They have to bring each piece back 1-by-1 and fit it into the board until the puzzle is complete.

SNUGGLE UP AND READ

Shared by Kate

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



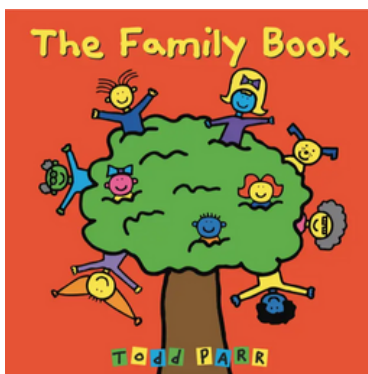
I Love Us!
A Book about Family



My Family, Your Family



Love Makes a Family



The Family Book



A Family is
a Family is a Family



All Are Welcome

➤➤➤ If you are looking for free fun Family Day activities in the qathet Regional District on Monday, Feb.19th click **HERE** and scroll down to Powell River, in the list of communities.

For more family themed activities to celebrate families this month, here is a great website that is full of ideas:

<https://teachingmama.org/preschool-family-theme-activities>



Each family is wonderfully unique!

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

<https://www.parents.com/parenting/dynamics/the-changing-face-of-the-american-family/>

<https://www.brighthorizons.com/resources/Article/How-to-Help-Children-Understand-Diverse-Families>

<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/talking-with-kids-families-come-in-all-shapes-and-sizes>

Shared by Raun



Pictures from messylittlemonster.com

Living inquiry: Engaging with others, materials and the world

Living inquiries" (known as "areas of learning" in the B.C. Ministry of Education [2008] framework) is used to describe the processes of thinking and learning that happen as children, educators, materials, and ideas interconnect (Atkinson & Dockendorf, 2019, p.63)

Materials:

- Paint **OR** Sharpies **OR** printouts and ModgePodge
- Rocks
- Things found in nature

Activity:

This fun and easy activity can be enjoyed by family members of all ages. The best part is that you don't need to buy anything as this activity can be done with paint, sharpies, or cutting and gluing on to stones you find on your property or at the beach.

1. Find some rocks that are big enough for your child to comfortably paint or draw on
2. Let the rocks dry
3. Paint, colour, or glue on different facial features. You can make them as realistic, silly, or true to your family members as you like. This is a great way to engage your child in looking at themselves in a mirror and painting what they see or looking at another family member.
4. Take the painted rocks outside and arrange them on the ground. What can you find to use for hair? For eyebrows? for accessories? for ears?

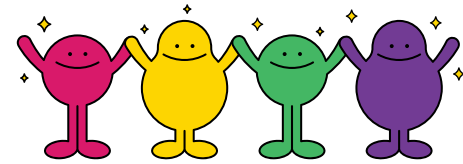
Extension:

What happens if you turn the eyes or the mouth? What emotions do you see?



For how to paint on stones, visit artbeatbox.com
 For inspiration on rock painting, visit [Stony Faces](http://StonyFaces.com)
 For printables and non-paint ideas, visit messylittlemonsters.com

Getting Outdoors With Your Family



By Danielle

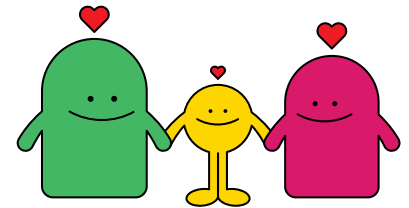
>>> Green Hearts Institute for Nature in Childhood has published a PDF brochure entitled "A Parents' Guide to Nature Play". This publication is quick read and provides key information about the value of being in nature, as well as providing insight into some of the barriers that are perceived about the risks of playing outdoors. If you are looking for essential information about outdoor play, here is a link:

https://naturalstart.org/sites/default/files/a_parents_guide_to_nature_play.pdf

As parents and caregivers of young children, it can be tricky to figure out how to navigate the "risk" of risky play. Here is a link to an informative article from Active For Life. Dr. Mariana Brussoni, developmental psychologist at UBC and risky play advocate, suggests "being a lifeguard" to children's risky play. For more information click [here](#).



Have a great Family Day weekend!



Getting outside as a family is a great way to create memories and build connections with nature. Here are a few ideas to help you get started:

<https://bcparent.ca/rainy-day-outdoor-activities/>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/outdoor-family-activities-2764716>



Some keen observers at StrongStart GO found these three tiny mushrooms growing in a tree stump on the Willingdon Beach Trail. Outdoor scavenger hunts are a great way to learn about the things that surround us! If you are looking for motivation to get out and play this winter, come and join us at StrongStart GO.

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

OUR NEXT STRONGSTART ALL TOGETHER IN THE PARK DAY IS TUESDAY FEB.6TH AT DA EVANS PARK IN CRANBERRY.

Dress warmly and come out to play!