

Family Education Centre Newsletter

Parent Information and Support

A United Way Funded Agency

Fall 2006



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Hello Everyone.

School is back along with a regular routine, including busy mornings and after school activities. Serena started kindergarten and it was fun watching her on the first day, eager and enthusiastic, as she finally got to “go to school”. I hope her enthusiasm lasts... for the next 14 years!

The board continues to focus on implementing the recommendations made by the consultant and the OCC (Operational Capacity Committee). These recommendations will improve our operational effectiveness and include implementing new Board committees and the annual planning cycle, and updating, as needed, our policies.

After Patrick’s resignation in July, the board and staff regrouped and put together a plan to operate without an ED until next June. This plan will require staff to take on additional responsibilities. I want to thank our staff, our parent educators and our volunteers and other supporters, who are dedicated to the agency and what we do, and who are willing to put in extra efforts to help the agency move through this next phase.

Judy Gast

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[GMAC Residential Funding](#)



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NOTICE

Patrick Thompson has left to pursue other opportunities.



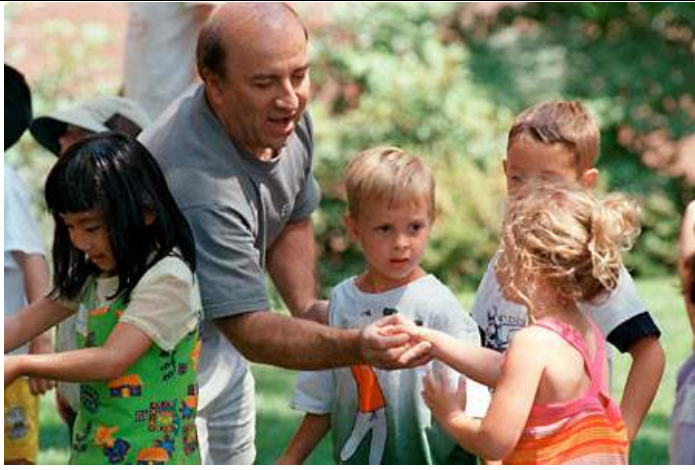
IMPORTANT NOTICE

In an effort to save money at FEC, we find it more efficient to send our newsletter via e-mail to our members. This way we save on the cost of printing and postage. We would greatly appreciate your co-operation by e-mailing fathima@familyedcentre.org with the e-mail address in which you would like to receive the newsletter.

JOB SHADOWING AT FEC!

We recently had the distinct pleasure of having young Will Peters join us on a “job shadowing” day to experience staff work at the Family Education Centre. Will is the child of Parent Educator, Claire Peters, one of FEC’s many skilled Parent Educators.

Once here, young William quickly busied himself by surfing the internet, (a skill so typical of our kids these days), to research any and all websites that dealt with parenting organizations or studies from universities around the world on the subject of parenting. To his amazement, (but not to ours), Will found out that very little research has been devoted to the very important job of being an effective parent. He asked us, after a full day of work, why, if this matter of parent education is so important, there is no practical information on the subject to help moms and dads. We could only respond that our society does not place the same importance on parenting as does FEC and that is part of our Mission: to reach out to as many parents as possible and let them know that we are here to help them in the most important job in the world: being parents. There is every reason to believe that once this special youngster becomes a man he will carry on in the tradition of his special parents and will raise his own children as they have raised him. This is how FEC transforms families and our communities.



PROGRAM COORDINATORS REPORT

I hope that everyone had a wonderful summer. I would like to draw your attention to the Parenting Course information enclosed in this newsletter. These are the programs that the Family Education Centre is offering to parents for the fall of 2006 and winter 2007. Once again, if you would like us to provide a parenting course or workshop for your school, church, company, day care, etc., please give me a call at 905-452-0332, Ext. 221.

Lorie Ann Chapman
Program Coordinator

FAMILY EDUCATION CENTRE PARTNERS WITH INVEST IN KIDS New Parenting Program for First-Time Expectant Moms and Dads

First-time parents expecting their baby anytime from late November 2006 to early January 2007, from mid-February 2007 to mid March 2007 or from late April to end of May 2007 can now enroll in a free, prenatal and parenting program - **The Parenting Partnership**. This is a two and a half year pilot program designed to help first-time parents gain the skills needed to give their child the best start in life and to meet the day-to-day challenges they face as a couple and as a family.

Eligible parents can now register for the Parenting Partnership in several locations in the GTA, Hamilton/Niagara and Ottawa-Carleton regions. **In Brampton, the program will be offered by the Family Education Centre in partnership with Brampton Neighbourhood Resource Centre and Invest in Kids and begins October 17, 2006. Registration is still open.**

Topics will cover the gamut from labour, delivery and recovery to shifted priorities in the couple relationship, finances and self-care; caring for your child including health & safety and nutrition; parenting including routines, guiding behaviour and supporting children's healthy social, emotional and intellectual development through positive parenting.

The program will accommodate the busy lives of new parents and will be delivered with a combination of weekly online sessions and face-to-face sessions held once a month at partnering centres in the community.

For additional information about the Parenting Partnership and to enroll in this program, please call Invest in Kids at 1-877-583-5437 (KIDS) or (416) 977-1222.

The Parenting Partnership is a free, two and a half year pre-natal and parenting program for first-time expectant parents. It was created by Invest in Kids, a national charity, to help parents to optimize their child's development and well-being, and to build strong, healthy families. To learn more about The Parenting Partnership, visit www.theparentingpartnership.ca

Thank You GMAC!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank GMAC for their wonderful donation of slightly used office furniture to FEC. We now have five new workstations, which not only help add to our look of professionalism but also help to keep the office very organized. Thank you again to GMAC for their generous donation.

CHANGING FAMILY PATTERNS

Our members may not be aware that the Family Education Centre provides programs to abused women in four shelters in the Region of Peel. We go in every week and deliver parenting and self esteem workshops. These programs are funded by the United Way and the Royal Bank.

The Family Education Centre has been doing this work for over twelve years. The women are always enthusiastic to receive parenting information and enjoy the general discussion around raising children.

Jacqueline Stanton

IN THE WORKS - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Neighbourhood Family Connections

The Neighbourhood Family Connections project funded through the Early Years Challenge funding ended March 30, 2006. The Region of Peel has hired Karen Sedore to do a project review. We hope the results of this review will be shared with FEC soon.

Some Facts:

- NFC provided 468 hours of direct service (234 workshops) to over 2000 parents and over 1800 children over the three year period
- Over 60% of the parents attended more than one workshop
- The majority of participants were women.
- The majority of participants were between the ages of 25 and 35 years of age.
- Family income and participants' level of education was nicely distributed
- 89% of participants were satisfied and very satisfied with the workshop
- 86% were likely and more than likely to recommend the workshop to others
- 98% of parents reported they have gained some, more than some, or lots of confidence in their parenting skills
- Overall participants were very positive about their workshop experience

Most Important Skills Learned fell into three categories:

1. *Increased Awareness:*
 - Understanding parenting styles
 - Understanding my anger
 - Understanding my child's behaviour
 - Understanding my child's stage of development and temperament
2. *Positive Behavioural Skills/Choices:*
 - Using problem solving strategies
 - Empower children through choices
 - Listening to children, reflective listening
 - Using I-Messages
 - Acknowledging and validating feelings
3. *Positive Attitudes*
 - Be patient
 - Respect children
 - Appreciate the positives
 - I'm doing okay, be patient with myself
 - I am not alone

Neighbourhood Family Connections promotes positive parenting, family connections and play-based learning in twelve different Peel communities.

I would like to **thank Paula Nunes-Haggett** for taking on the role of Special Projects Coordinator-NFC in January. Paula was able to jump in running which enabled the project to continue its smooth sailing through to the end.

Neighbourhood Family Connections thanks the Government of Ontario and the Region of Peel for their financial support

Family Futures

Family Futures, another Early Years Challenge fund project was completed in June 2005. A proposal was sent to The Ministry of Child and Youth via Peel Children in June 2006. As of September 2006 the Ministry of Child and Youth has agreed to fund Family Futures for a two year period. The Family Education Centre and the Ministry are working hard to get the program up and running as soon as possible.

Community Development

Jacqueline Stanton has taken over the Corporate Outreach position. We are pleased to announce that two corporations have become involved in FEC's Corporate Parent Education Lunch and Learns and parenting courses.

This fall has also been exciting following up on potential partnerships with community based service organizations and educational institutions through a variety of committees and direct contact, including Harold Brathwaite Secondary School, Peel Health and Children's Services Discipline Messages, and Success by Six Peel.

Marketing Committee

We are very excited to be working on updating and improving the FEC website. We had secured a volunteer webmaster from GMAC in the Spring. He provided us with a template for the new website look. The Marketing Committee is taking this template to potential webdesigners to implement. Thank you to Robert Lavigne for his design suggestions.

The Marketing Committee hopes to make the FEC website more user-friendly and professionally appealing.

Marketing Committee Members: Yvonne Patterson, Cynthia Mason, Melanie Gervais, Diane Myers (staff representative), Ana Paula Biscaia, and Kim Prince.

Kindest regards,
Diane Myers
Manager, Community Development

IN THE MEMORY OF DEE DEE MARTIN

We are all feeling great sorrow and pain today. Despite her illness of the past few months, we are in shock. It is unthinkable that we won't have Dee Dee to talk to or spend time with again. Let us take the time we each need to reflect on what her life has meant to us.

Dee Dee was very proud of her Irish Catholic roots. Her parents, Sean and Jo Martin, emigrated to Canada and brought up their family of 6 children here. Dee Dee, being the eldest, was a "big sister" to four brothers and then at last, to her sister Maura. This role was so familiar to her that she will be remembered by many of us in this way as she was always there ready to take charge and take care of so many.

Throughout her many years of schooling, Dee Dee remained a straight A student. As a young girl, she was a soloist in the parish choir and had a voice like an angel. As part of a large group of friends growing up in Two Mountains, Dee Dee enjoyed and shared so many laughs and some tears, countless parties and a few broken hearts. We celebrated life together at weddings and the births of our babies. We cried together at the loss of spouses and deaths of loved ones.

Matthew, Dee Dee's godson, received a belated Christmas present from her this week. Dee Dee loved to celebrate occasions and, in fact, ordinary days became celebrations because of her enormous generosity and love of giving gifts. What are the lasting gifts that Dee Dee leaves to us?

Dee Dee loved people. She possessed an amazing ability to make each of us feel special. It comes as no surprise to see such an assortment of friends join together to remember her, from neighbours, colleagues from work, class-mates from law school, lifelong friends and even her avon lady. Dee Dee loved her family which included not only her parents, siblings and children but aunts and nieces and nephews and even some of her in-laws. How many of us has Dee Dee been there for to see us through a dark time? True, she was often late, but why? Likely because she was attending to another's needs. Dee Dee was known for her gift of the gab and we often joked that she could talk to anyone, anytime about anything. This was because she was genuinely interested in others.

Dee Dee loved music, dancing, Spanish, food, wine, margaritas, travel and reading. Her greatest love was for her children, Conor, Aidan and Sean. She often said that if she had done nothing else in her life, she had done the most important by being their mother. Her illness gave them an opportunity to take care of her and they showed great courage, love and devotion.

We will all miss Dee Dee but none more profoundly than they. Her illness allowed all of us to stop and let her know our gratitude and love. It brought us all together. We are her legacy. Her life and love are her gifts to us. Let us be there for her boys. Let us celebrate a wonderful life fully lived. Let us continue to learn from her generous gifts to us.

From the Eulogy – By Donna McCarthy

Dee Dee was Senior Counsel for The Insurance Bureau of Canada. Speaking with Mr. Randy Bundus, Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of IBC it is not surprising that all of her colleagues loved and respected Dee Dee and that they are feeling the loss as much as any of us at FEC.

Inspired by Dee Dee's many contributions to both IBC and our organization, the Board of Directors of the Family Education Centre has decided to establish **The Deirdre (Dee Dee) Martin Memorial Fund** to honour Deidre and her outstanding service to parents and families. The Insurance Bureau of Canada is partnering with us in this very worthy endeavour.

Conor, Dee Dee's eldest son, is very supportive of this initiative honouring his mother.

Please look for further information in our next newsletter on how you can join us in honouring the work of an outstanding parent and volunteer through **The Deirdre (Dee Dee) Martin Memorial Fund**.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead

Those willing to donate their time to the Family Education Centre are of enormous value to our organization. Our volunteers do not volunteer to build their resume but rather to build themselves and those around them. It is their strong belief and support of our philosophies and mission statement that enables our organization to become a much stronger unit. Our parenting courses have changed many of our volunteer’s style of parenting and in return, their time and help allows us to provide our parenting courses for families yet to have had the experience. As we work hand in hand, it is FEC’s pleasure to introduce these outstanding people and their part in “changing the world” of parenting as well as the many other attributes that come from volunteering which makes them eager to be involved with us. It is encouraging to discover the path each one of us follows here at FEC, why we choose to be on it, where we see it taking us and the organization. The best way to do this is to discern more about our volunteers and most importantly how we can lead and help each other along the way.

Lauren Aucoin

Editor



The featured volunteer for this issue: *Judy Gast*

Background: Judy has been with the Family Education Centre for six years. When she first began, she had a two-year-old daughter. Her daughter is now seven. She also has another daughter who is three. Judy began by taking a parenting course with Gwyneth Lewis and Cameron Beheshti and attributes Cameron’s passion for the agency and recruitment as the reason she wanted to be more involved. In January of 2002 Judy decided she would become a member of our board. She now sits as Chair.

Q: So Judy, what was it that peaked your interest about this organization?

A: First, it was my self-interest in parenting. At the time, I had one child and just wanted to learn more parenting skills. Then I thought more about parenting changing, and that changing the world...the long-term implications, societal implications. Imagine a world where everyone had 'perfect' parents, not that I think it’s possible to be 'perfect', but think of what society would be like if everyone was raised with parent’s who had the democratic parenting skills that we teach. There would be a lot more peace and order in the world.

Q: You mean as in a generational effect, where FEC can reach more parents, and then their children will learn to parent democratically and so forth?

A: Exactly.

Q: What about FEC is of the most importance to you?

A: That it is an organization, which lives its values. We teach appreciation and we appreciate each other. We teach respect and open communication not just for families but to do a good job of that as an agency. We have the courage to be imperfect. These are some of our values and we live up to them as an organization and that’s important to me.

Q: Speaking of values, how do you apply FEC’s values to your own family?

A: That is a non-stop effort. With having a 3 and 7 year old you are constantly thinking. I find it most challenging when applying the logical and natural consequences. It’s easy to just count to 3 loudly because it gets an immediate

reaction. But with democratic parenting you have to stop and think and that can be difficult. I think it's the right way to do it though. It's hard to think when your angry but I've learned that you don't have to always react right away. You can calm down first and then approach the situation. Going back to how we were raised, being yelled at, yelling is just a quick response. Logical and natural consequences are not always easy but they're actually helpful.

Q: As the chair of the board, what do you see for the future of FEC?

A: The last year and a half goes back to professionalism. We have increased and improved that and that will enable us to increase our reach to more parents. The most important thing for the future is to continue implanting steps through the Operational Capacity Committee. The SOEF project recommended professional tools and it's our job to now implement them. We need to realize the value of the SOEF work and the value of what we've invested both time and money in. We need to follow through with structure changes. Fundraising is another important area of focus.

Q: What do you see as being FEC's greatest strength?

A: The people. It goes back to values and living the values we preach and promote as an agency. I was attracted to the women in the agency. Often with charities people align their charity with phases in their life, not always, but sometimes. These women stuck with the agency through thick and thin because they believed in it. Even though many of their children have grown up, they are still involved. Dedication is strength, a key strength.

Q: What have you learned from your involvement with FEC?

A: I have learned about parenting through parent educator training. I have also learned about not-for-profit work from volunteering and how it differs from the corporate world. I feel I have also learned how to manage different situations from even the difficult experiences. Leadership in a democratic environment is about motivational skills. You cannot fire people who volunteer their time when there is a problem, so you learn to discover what motivates them and how you can help them achieve that. It is not about authority but about encouragement.

Q: Thanks for your time Judy. Finally, would you mind telling me what some of your favourite work is that you have done with FEC?

A: The strategic planning process a year ago helped me obtain more information about what's important to partners and funders such as why they choose to fund us. I also had the opportunity to get to know Marlene better. Teaching in the Vanier centre was a new environment for me and I saw how women face obstacles, like drug abuse, abuse from parents and partners. I saw a group of women that wanted to learn so that they did not repeat these obstacles with their own children. It's exciting when you have a classroom setting where people are willing to learn and hopefully some will change and they will not repeat the cycles. I can see the impact on women of this kind of work. That's why I like it.

****The Volunteer Profile will become a regular part of the seasonal Newsletter. We will, at random, be asking our volunteers to take part in this process and hope you will be both willing and pleased to share your thoughts with us****

By Lauren Aucoin
Communications Specialist

2005 Annual General Meeting

A special highlight during the month of June was our 32nd Annual General Meeting of the Corporation. By all indications and from messages we received from those who were in attendance the meeting was a great success. I wish to recognize Board Chair Judy Gast who did an outstanding job presiding over the meeting. As a result of the exceptional contribution of volunteers and staff over many years we were able to capture the sentiments of several important supporters and partners of FEC during taped interviews that appeared on the big screen following each item on the meeting's agenda. Of particular note was the unscripted testimonial of Ms. Marilyn Field, Executive Director of Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre where FEC parent educator Jacqueline Stanton faithfully delivers our self-esteem course to women clients who have escaped the terrible domestic violence they and their children have had to endure. Ms. Field did not hold back on her praise of our Jacqueline calling her "dynamite" and that our program that she delivers is "actually helping for the first time to turn the lives of these abused women and their children around". It was indeed a proud moment for all of us and a pleasant surprise for Jacqueline who was not expecting such well-deserved recognition.

I wish to also congratulate the wonderful volunteers that were elected to the new Board of Directors. With a talented and dedicated group like this to lead our organization in 2006 we can be confident that FEC will continue to succeed in reaching out to even more parents and families in our community.

New FEC Board & Executive Elected

At its 2005 Annual General Meeting held June 21, 2006 at the Mississauga Convention Centre, the following individuals were elected to the Board of Directors:

Judy Gast
Cameron Beheshti
Shameem Mohammed
Kelly Neuber
Claire Peters
Palwinder Khalon
David Capek
Roger Tang
Rochelle Coobs-Paulus
Raymond Young

Immediately following the AGM, the new Board met to elect the following Officers:

Judy Gast: Chair
Claire Peters: Vice Chair
Kelly Neuber: Secretary
Roger Tang: Treasurer



IN THIS PHOTO: Chair of the Board Judy Gast

AGM AWARDS



IN THIS PHOTO: Award presented to **George Beshiri** from the **Brampton Guardian** for their "Outstanding service in support of our Mission, Goals and Objectives"



IN THIS PHOTO: Award presented to **Gay Routhier-Paige** for "Outstanding service in a staff role in support of our Mission, Goals and Objectives"



IN THIS PHOTO: Judy Gast presents award to Interim Executive Director **Marlene Van Esch** for "Outstanding service in a staff role in support of our Mission, Goals and Objectives"



IN THIS PHOTO: **Jim Boyd** presents the Bampton and Area Community Foundation cheque to **Judy Gast**



IN THIS PHOTO: Award presented by Communication Specialist **Lauren Aucoin** (Right) to **Alex Alcoba** (Centre) on behalf of 336 Productions for their editing and camera work for the AGM.

PARENTING COURSES

September 2006 to March 2007

The Family Education Centre is a non-profit, charitable organization striving to enrich the quality of life for families through community-based, parent-to-parent education, support and training. The following parenting courses are being offered at Central Public School, 24 Alexander St., Brampton. The cost is \$80.00 per person unless otherwise specified. A text, approximately \$25.00 (cost is not included in the registration fee) is a necessary component of most parenting courses and may be purchased the first night of instruction. For information and to pre-register, please call the Family Education Centre at 905-452-0332. For more information, please go to our web site at www.familyedcentre.org. Our administrative office is at 24 - 50 Kennedy Rd., S., Brampton ON

L6W 3R7. Payment by VISA is now available. *Subsidy is available; please inquire.*

ANGER MANAGEMENT FOR PARENTS

7:00 – 9:30 p.m. for 6 weeks

Understand what triggers your anger. Learn skills to deal with conflict and anger. Explore expectations, communication styles as well as learn how to deal with power struggles. Your anger can be dealt with in a manner that leaves everyone feeling ok.

Tuesday, September 19 - October 24/06

PARENTING YOUNG CHILDREN (For parents of children ages 1 through 5)

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. for 8 weeks

Explore how a child's personality, social skills, belief systems and lifestyle develop. Learn the purpose of misbehaviour and how to deal with it. Learn ways to handle crying, temper tantrums, jealousy and public misbehaviour.

Thursday, October 5 – November 23/06

PARENTING TEENAGERS (For parents of children ages 12 and up)

7:00 – 9:30 p.m. for 6 weeks

Building responsibility and improving the relationship between parents and teenagers will be the focus of this series of discussion sessions. Topics to be covered will include: parenting styles, goals of misbehaviour, personality development, emotions, encouragement, listening skills, expressing feelings, discipline, development of responsibility and selecting appropriate approaches to discipline.

Wednesday, January 24 - February 28/07

RAISING RESPONSIBLE CHILDREN (For parents of children ages 6 - 11)

7:00 - 9:30 p.m. for 6 weeks

Create more satisfying, productive relationships with your children. Learn practical discipline methods, guidelines for building self-esteem, better family communication, and much more!

Tuesday, February 13 - March 27/07

**Family Education
Centre**

24-50 Kennedy Rd. S
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Visit us on the web:
www.familyedcentre.org

Staff Phone Directory

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FATHIMA BUTOOL Program Administrator & Volunteer Coordinator.....	223
LYNN HAND Bookkeeper.....	300
DIANE MYERS Manager, Community Development.....	301
JACQUELINE STANTON Parent Information and Support Coordinator.....	226
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Festival of the Family

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the 2006 Festival of the Family was cancelled. We would like to thank the following for their generous donations, which will be used in upcoming FEC programs or events.

