



# Aionkwatakari:teke

(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"For Us To Be Healthy"

Vol. 14, No. 3

Kahnawake's Only Health and Wellness Newsletter

Seskéha / August 2009



I hope I can be a great parent someday!

## Parenting

building blocks for future generations



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## Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed & encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative & educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. **Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS.** We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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Ieronhienhá:wi Tatum McComber

This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.



## Editor's Notebook

**W**elcome to this issue of Aionkwatakari:teke. In case you haven't guessed, this issue focuses on parenting and some of the challenges parents face. Taryn Conlon has an article on discussing sex with your child(ren) and Betty Scott, from the Family & Wellness Center, has an article about the over scheduling of children. Getting them involved in recreational activities is great but at what point are they doing too much? While you're at work, they're also having a long day at school and often have homework they have to complete at home. A lot of children have their evenings and weekends taken up with sports practice and games and the question is when do they get the chance to be just...kids? It's tough to balance the need for exercise and recreation with the need for down time. There are no easy or definite answers but hopefully you'll find Betty's article useful.

This issue will also give you some idea of the kind of work and programs offered at KSCS and at other organizations. We also have articles from Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre and, last issue, from Tawatohnhni'saktha. These partnerships are ways to offer you a well rounded scope on issues concerning Kahnawake. We also feature a profile on Ieronhienhá:wi McComber, who turned her dream of teaching Kanien'keha into reality. It's through her work—and the work of others like her—that the language will live on.

Thank you for reading this newsletter. When you're finished with it, please recycle it.

Sken:nen,  
Marie David



*Cover photography: used with permission from Sue Ann Morris, photographer: Mary Gilbert. Cover design: Marie David*

**ERRATUM:** Carole Walker should have been listed as proofreader along with Beatrice Taylor. On page 11, Terry Young is listed as prevention worker. In fact, he is a support counsellor. We regret the errors.



## Overloading Children: No Time for Downtime

by BETTY SCOTT, PREVENTION WORKER

Parents are finding ways to keep their children as busy as they are and may be raising children who are also as stressed as they are.

Many things can cause stress and overload on family members. Housework, homework, hockey, figure skating, swimming lessons, soccer...the list goes on and on. Children are involved in activities that leave them with no downtime. We all know a child like this; the one who

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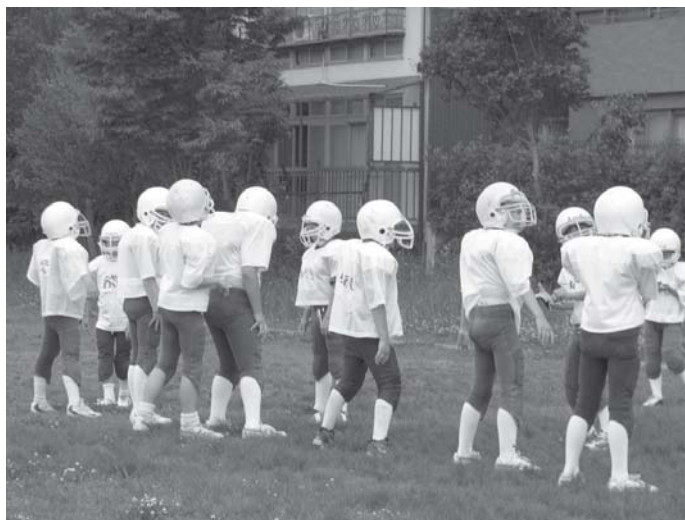
**Children are involved in activities that leave them with no down time**

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gets off the school bus and goes straight to hockey practice, eats at the arena or in the car on the way to practice and gets back home just in time to tackle some homework and fall into bed at 10:00 p.m.

Or there's the child who competes in two sports, plays a musical instrument, goes for private tutoring or takes computer or other classes...all on top of a full day of school. Maybe you see your own child in one of these descriptions and you may think that this is how we keep our children busy, not realizing that these children may be missing out on their childhood. Where's the downtime, the times for children to just hang out with friends, read for

pleasure, play with the dog or draw on the sidewalk with chalk? Some busy, active children are overwhelmed and headed for burnout



Pee wee football. Photo by Chris Gladis

by the age of eight or ten. Others are overloaded because of family pressures or their own desires to participate in too many activities.

Each child may have different thresholds for activity and may also handle stress in different ways. Some children may be so involved in their activities that they don't realize they're trying to do too much. As a parent, it is up to you to help determine when your child is in over

their head. You should then set a reasonable schedule for your child, one that everyone can live with most of the time. Dr. Lois Nightingale is a psychotherapist in California. She believes that when children truly have

a passion for something and want to do well they rarely feel too much stress or pressure. "It is more often when the parents are 'giving the child the opportunity they never had' that troubles start," she says. As parents, be sure that your child is the one who wants to join activities and is not pressured because other

children are joining. It makes for less stress when everyone in the family is actively doing something they enjoy.

One thing is certain: if the activities your children are doing are stressing YOU out, your children are definitely doing too much.

Source: Sather, Jeanne. "Activity Overload: Are Kids Doing Too Much?" <http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/Departments/Elementary/?article=activities>

Betty Scott is a prevention worker / parenting facilitator with FWC.







## “Let’s Talk About Sex”

by TARYN CONLON, PREVENTION WORKER

Those may be the four hardest words you may ever have to say to your child. Babies grow up and before you know it they are teenagers going through puberty with raging hormones. So, how do you make talking about sex to your child easier?

The earlier you talk to your adolescent about sex the better, but it’s never too late to begin the conversation. Educating your child about sexuality may be as simple as being open minded and available to discussing the subject rather than lecturing or pretending to be an expert on the topic.

### Discuss the good and bad

Adolescents need to know that sex isn’t just about sexually transmitted infections (STI) and unwanted pregnancies. Talk to your child about all aspects of sex: emotions, relationships, intimacy, and experience. Sharing with your child all the consequences of sex (good and bad) gives them greater education about the topic and enables them to make better decisions and informed choices.

*Parents are a child’s first sex educators.* Children learn about male and female sex roles and how to act in relationships in the homes. It’s important for parents to consider their own values and feelings about sexuality and realize that they model

sexual behaviours daily to their children. Parents need to remember they are role models every day and our behaviours often speak louder than our words.

*Be prepared to be caught off guard.* Your child will more than likely ask you questions about sex when you least expect it. They may ask you questions that leave you speechless. Their questions may make you unsure of how to respond. You may not understand what they are talking about or be familiar with the correct information. If you don’t know, try asking them to further explain what they mean or consult resources together. Learning about sexual matters together is a great opportunity for opening dialogue and exploring information that can be beneficial to both of you.

*Adolescents are developing a strong sense of themselves and how to have emotional relationships.* With all these new feelings of emotions it’s important for parents to listen to what their child has to say and not judge them. Communicating is an act of sharing and people should be open and ready to have conversations in a respectful manner. Any forced

discussions or opinions will cause conflict and your child may be less likely to seek your help in the future.

*There is no miracle solution when approaching the topic of sex.* Try to have a good understanding of your own attitudes and perceptions and consult resources if you need help to discuss the topic. If you take away anything from this article it should be this: trust and openness are essential when talking with your child about sex.

#### Resources:

[www.cfsh.ca](http://www.cfsh.ca) Canadian Federation for Sexual Health includes sections on sex education for youth and parents.

[www.sexualityandu.ca](http://www.sexualityandu.ca) Information on STIs and contraception methods. Sections on adolescent sexuality designed especially for parents.



# Dental Health Tips for Parents and Guardians



by SUSIE MONTOUR, KMHC DENTAL HYGIENIST

\*Part of Children's Oral Health Initiative.

## Tips on Toothpaste:

- Children should use no more than a **pea-sized amount** of toothpaste (see back of package).



- Children should be encouraged to spit out toothpaste after brushing.
- It is better NOT to rinse after brushing in order to give the fluoride a chance to work.
- Children should NEVER eat toothpaste.
- Parents should always dispense the toothpaste for the child.
- Always store toothpaste out of children's reach during the day.
- Encourage children to brush their teeth then parents should follow up brushing their teeth as well. (Focus on scrubbing the back teeth).

- Aim to brush at least twice a day for two minutes.
- Although they are eager, children need help brushing their teeth until about age seven.

## Serving Sugary Snacks:

- If you are going to give your child a sugary treat, give it during mealtime, then have them brush their teeth afterwards.
- Why? The saliva generated during eating will help neutralize acids and help rinse excess sugars away.
- The worst type of cavity causing snack is one that sticks to the teeth (e.g., fruit rollup or toffee), or bathes the teeth in sugars for more than 20 minutes (e.g., lollipop).
- Avoid sweets before bedtime.

## Serving Sugary Drinks:

- Every sip of a sweet drink has the potential for a 20-minute acid attack to the teeth.
- Have your child drink until he/she is satisfied then take the drink away. Afterwards offer water or milk.
- Avoid drinking fruit punch, powdered drinks, and soda on a daily basis. These are high in sugar and low in nutrients. Save these beverages for special events (e.g., parties, restaurant meals, or only at mealtimes).

- Offer milk, water or 100 per cent juice, and always dilute 100 per cent juice with water.
- Chocolate milk is good for the teeth even though it contains sugar; it is better than a soft drink.
- Avoid letting children sip on fruit punch/drinks all day. Fruit drinks have just as much natural sugars in them as soft drinks.
- Water has no calories, is refreshing and thirst quenching and you don't have to worry about cavities.
- Milk is full of nutrients like calcium and is low in natural sugars.

## Other Tips:

If you are on the go and can't brush you can...

- Chew sugarless gum e.g, Trident. Chewing gum sweetened with **xylitol**, has been proven to inactivate the bacteria that cause cavities. Chew for at least 20 minutes to get the full effect. Kids love the bubble gum flavor!
- Eat cheese. It will neutralize the PH (acidity) in the mouth and give your teeth a boost of calcium too.
- Rinse your mouth or swish with water.

*\*A program brought to you by the Community Health Unit of the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre.*



## Summer Student Employment Why Getting a Higher Education Pays Off

by TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS CORRESPONDENT

**T**ewatohnhi'saktha's\* summer student employment program offers students a chance to gain valuable work experience. Students have to be returning to school in the fall to be eligible. Cole McComber and Alan-John Rice are two of the program's recent hires.



Cole McComber. Photo by Tyson Phillips

Cole, 23, attended Kahnawake Survival School from grades seven to ten, and Stanstead College (a boarding school near Vermont) for grades 11 and 12. "I felt like I wasn't being given a fair shake with the teams around here. I learned about their hockey program and the rest just fell into place," said Cole.

Cole had to adjust to his new school environment and being away from family and friends, which was a huge culture shock. "There was a lot I wasn't ready for. The first few months were hard, however, once hockey started, I made friends and life there became fun. The guidance counsellor encouraged all of us to apply to colleges and universities. Since the MEQ\*\* recognizes grade 12 as CEGEP courses, I went straight to

university out of high school." Cole is now finishing his BA in environmental studies at Carleton University in Ottawa.

Alan-John, 19, went to St. Georges High School and Dawson College. He is now attending Bishops University in Lennoxville working towards a BA in history and a minor in English. "I'm even thinking of going for my Masters after I get my B.A.," said Alan-John, who hopes to be a teacher. "I am a Heads Up facilitator for our summer camp. We teach youth, aged 13 to 17, how to build a business from the ground up," explains Alan-John, who's working with two other students on the project.

Cole is the Youth Programs assistant whose duties include drafting contracts, calling clients and employers, site visits and more. "There's a lot of paper work and

parents support and "For me to be a teacher, I knew I had to continue my schooling after high school," mentioned Alan-John.

Tewatohnhi'saktha has many summer employment opportunities for students. "A summer job is a good place to network and meet new



Alan-John Rice. Photo by Tyson Phillips

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**"With a university degree, you will not be limited in the workforce, you will have more opportunities."**

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computer work involved, but that's what I'm familiar with. When I finally graduate, I imagine myself working in an office somewhere," admits Cole.

Unfortunately, not every high school graduate in Kahnawake continues their education. Both Alan-John and Cole felt a higher level of education would lead to more opportunities. "My parents always rewarded high grades with some sort of incentive. Doing well in school was something they always promoted," said Cole. Alan-John also had his

people. I've had the opportunity to work in different organizations ...each job was different and a good learning experience," explained Cole. Alan-John and Cole want the youth to know that university is a lot of hard work, but worth it in the end. "With a university degree, you will not be limited in the workforce, you will have more opportunities," said Alan John. Cole plans to graduate in 2010, and Alan-John in 2013. Both plan to work in Kahnawake after graduation.

\* The economic development commission of Kahnawake.

\*\* Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec

# Parenting Groups at the FWC

by STEPHANIE HORNE, PREVENTION WORKER

**A**s a parent in the community, it's nice to know there are activities being offered specifically for parents at the Family and Wellness Center (FWC) here in Kahnawake.

One of the greatest benefits of the FWC parenting groups is getting together with other parents and sharing experiences about raising our children. I know many parents look forward to the once-a-week outings, to the opportunities of learning from either guest speakers or from other moms and dads, and making new acquaintances. Through partnerships and networking within our community, the FWC has been able offer information to parents on the following topics:

- Personal care and wellness according to our traditions
- Sun safety and cancer prevention
- Car seat safety
- Infant CPR
- Pandemic planning for the individual family
- Fire safety and prevention
- Nutrition and healthy lifestyles
- Baby and toddler development
- Speech and language
- Baby massage techniques

- Infant and toddler temperament
- Infant and toddler exercises
- Etc.

The FWC aims to incorporate our traditional, cultural and historical knowledge into our activities to give parents an opportunity to learn the language and culture in a relaxed atmosphere.

It's also an opportunity to learn the importance of traditional Kanien'kehaka parenting and create memories that reflect our culture. Moms and dads are welcome to take part in the groups and can come alone or as a couple.

The interactive groups are provided twice a year. Sessions are held in the fall with another session offered in the spring. The age groups are as follows:

- Parent / Baby Interactive Group: 0-6 Months
- Parent / Infant Interactive Group: 7-11 Months
- Parent / Toddler Interactive Group: 1-2 years

If you would like more information or would like to register for a session, please contact the FWC at 450-638-0408.

*Stephanie Horne is a prevention worker / parenting facilitator with the FWC.*



# Berry Banana Smoothies

Our back page article suggests that children should begin each day with a healthy breakfast. It helps children have more energy and learn more in school. Here's a recipe for those busy mornings that you can whip up in minutes. Enjoy!



*Photo by Toots Fontaine*

Servings: 2

## Ingredients

- 2 cups (500 mL) orange juice
- 1 banana, cut in chunks
- 1 cup (250 mL) frozen berries

## Preparation

Place orange juice, banana and berries in food processor or blender. Attach lid and process until smooth. Pour into two large glasses and serve.

*Source: Canadian Living magazine: Breakfast for Learning. ([http://www.canadianliving.com/family/kids/breakfast\\_for\\_learning.php](http://www.canadianliving.com/family/kids/breakfast_for_learning.php))*



# Breastfeeding Benefits Can Last a Lifetime

by VANESSA RICE, KATERI MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CENTRE

**B**reastfeeding can be one of the most rewarding experiences you and your baby can share. In today's world, breastfeeding is both rewarding and environmentally friendly. It takes time but once you and your baby are comfortable and well acquainted with one another the experience can be rewarding.

The recommendation is to exclusively breastfeed your baby until the middle of the first year. This means no water, supplements or solid foods. You can prepare for breastfeeding while you are pregnant—not by toughening up your nipples as we were once told—but by planning for your baby's birth, attending prenatal classes and getting the information you need.

One way of getting information is by attending breastfeeding support group meetings. You will get to see babies breastfeed and meet other new mothers who can provide you with good information and support once the baby arrives.

## How breastfeeding benefits you and your baby

- May protect your baby from developing type 1 diabetes.
  - May lower your baby's risk of *sudden infant death syndrome* (SIDS).
  - Can help mom lose weight.
  - Can lower your stress level and reduce postpartum bleeding.
  - May reduce your risk of some types of cancers.
  - May protect against osteoporosis later in life.
- Skin to skin contact immediately after birth, which lasts for at least an hour, has the following positive effects on the baby:
- Is more likely to latch on, and latch on well.
  - Has more stable and normal skin temperatures.
  - Has more stable and normal heart rates and blood pressures.
  - Has higher blood sugars.
  - Is less likely to cry.
  - Is more likely to breastfeed exclusively longer.



## A Good Beginning

The baby is put to the breast immediately after delivery. The baby and mother should room together. Artificial nipples must not be given to the baby.

There should be no restrictions on length of feeding or frequency of feedings. Supplements of water, sugar water and/or formula are rarely required. Proper positioning and latching on are crucial to success.

If you need any information, you can contact Vanessa at 450-638-3930 ext. 324 or at home at 450-638-1524.

Source: Dr. Jack Newman



# Girl **POWER** Media

## Hypersexualization and Girl Power

by MARIE DAVID

**H**ypersexualization is the portrayal of women, more often young girls, whose sex is portrayed in a magnified way. For instance, girls as young as eight or nine are portrayed in media as being highly sexualized: high heels, short skirts, suggestive poses, pouty lips, looking innocent yet suggesting sex.

Girl Power suggests girls are strong and capable and that femininity can be empowering. It was epitomized through popular culture through television shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (which showed a strong female in short skirts and high heels battling bad guys.) However, many believe the movement places too much importance on narrowly defined ideals of beauty and, critics say, Girl Power has become more about the sexualization of young girls and their empowerment to consume, hence the heavy marketing aimed at young children.

### Girl Power's Changing Face

Some academics and social activists identified other ways girls can be empowered through media. Claudia Mitchel, a professor at McGill University, is involved in several visual projects including the use of photovoice with girls in Rwanda and projects in South Africa. Photovoice is a process used in education and to affect social change. It's aimed at empowering those who are disadvantaged, often youth, women, and minority groups.

For Mitchel, this process involved giving cameras to young Rwandan women and having them take pictures in their community of places they considered safe/unsafe.

The results were powerful and often eye opening. For instance, one photograph was of a toilet in a school. While it was a fairly harmless looking toilet, the girl said it was unsafe because girls could be raped there.



Using a camera is just one way for girls—and boys—to use media, either as a tool for social change or as a potential career. However, female involvement in media won't change existing stereotypes or stop the sexualization of young girls in and of itself. Despite more women being involved in media, the pressure to maintain the status quo prevents change from happening, especially when it continues to be men calling the shots.

That doesn't mean opportunities don't exist or that nothing can be done. For one, if you see or hear something on radio, television, or the Internet that you find objectionable, you can complain to either the CRTC or the Canadian Advertising

Standards Council. Another thing that can be done is to make media that is reflective of reality. It can be as simple as a camera (still or video) and simple software. Women can put together a podcast, write a blog, create video, or produce their own

photographic essay of the world as they see it. Below is a list of blogs by women and links to more information on photovoice. You don't have to restrict yourself to these blogs. If you have an interest, say documentary films, technology, or manga\*, there's probably a blog out there on that.

<http://www.indigenousaction.org/>

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/>

<http://www.blogsbywomen.org>

<http://www.blogger.com/>

<http://photovoice.ca/>

<http://www.photovoice.org/>

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca>

<http://www.adstandards.com/>

\*manga: a type of comic book or cartoon popularized in Japan and covering a broad range of subjects.



## International FASD Awareness Day

by TARYN CONLON

September 9, 2009 marks the annual International FASD day. People from all over the world gather for events to raise awareness about the dangers from drinking during pregnancy and acknowledge the families and individuals knowingly and unknowingly struggling with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

The first International FASD Day was held on September 9, 1999 with a minute of reflection at 9:09 a.m. A group of parents organized the first awareness day because of their frustrations with the lack of awareness by professionals and the general public. They decided an annual day would help raise awareness of the disorder and educate the public. The ninth day of the ninth month of the year 1999 was first selected to symbolically represent the nine months that a pregnant woman should abstain from alcohol.

FASD is a term that describes a range of disabilities that may affect people whose mothers drank alcohol while they were pregnant. These disabilities may cause people to have physical deformities, problems learning, poor memory, difficulties with vision and hearing, and have serious problems controlling their behaviour.

In small or large quantities, rarely or frequently, alcohol can have serious consequences on a developing fetus. There is no safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy and there is no safe time to drink during pregnancy.

If you're pregnant don't drink, if you drink don't get pregnant. If you are pregnant and have problems with alcohol or drugs please contact your health care professional. If you need more information regarding FASD you can contact: **FASD information Service** (Canadian Center on Substance Abuse) 1-800-559-4514 or **Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services** 450-632-6880.

**There is no safe amount of alcohol during pregnancy and there is no safe time to drink during pregnancy**

If you stop drinking at any point during your pregnancy, you will improve your chances of having a healthy baby. Remember that friends, family and community members can all help mom stay alcohol free. We all need to work together for a more positive future, helping Kahnawake ensure seven generations of healthy futures.

This year will mark the tenth anniversary of international FASD day. Get ready for 09/09/09! Watch for events and awareness campaigns in your community.



Image by Liz Van Dhal.

## Kids in the Middle

by STEPHANIE HORNE

Kids in the middle - all too often, this is the case when parents are separated or divorced. Children may feel that they have to choose between their parents. The fact is that your child loves both of you and should be given the opportunity to have both of you in their life. "No one can replace you in their heart. Just knowing that their parent loves them and is still in there pitching as a parent, has a profound effect on their wellbeing [sic] and sense of self esteem. You cannot be replaced." (BC Council for Families).

Also, for parents in general, whether separated, divorced or together, it is important to be aware of the following *do's and don'ts of cooperative co-parenting*:

- Be polite to each other in front of your children.
- Do not share any negative feelings about the other parent with your children.
- Talk with each other directly. Never use your children or others as messengers.
- Don't compete for your children's loyalty.
- Respect each other's style and household rules. (*Cooperative Co-parenting: Scriptographic, 1999*)

Continued on page 11

# A Dream to Teach: Ieronhienhá:wi Tatum McComber

by TYSON PHILLIPS

Ieronhienhá:wi Tatum McComber always wanted to be a teacher. Her goal became a reality in 2000 when she graduated from McGill University with a Bachelor's Degree in Education.

She's currently working at Kateri School and teaching young Mohawk children the language. "My parents did not know the language but I always paid very close attention to anyone who did." Ieronhienhá:wi went to school in Montreal and finished high school at Kahnawake Survival School (KSS) "Since I had no Kanien'keha for those years, they first put me in the lowest level Mohawk class. I really pushed myself and I was eventually placed in the advanced class," explained Ieronhienhá:wi.

Ieronhienhá:wi achieved another goal in 2004 when she graduated from the Kanien'keha Ratiwennahní:rats Language Program and is now able to converse in Kanien'keha fluently. She helped run the language nest at the 207 Longhouse, "I feel that you have to constantly use the language, in the home and when socializing." Ieronhienhá:wi is the mother to three boys. "My first son speaks very well in Kanien'keha. His father and I spoke to him in Mohawk and English. For my second son, we decided to speak to him only in Kanien'keha, and

we did the same for my third son. Their first language is Kanien'keha, and since it's everywhere, they've had no problems learning English."

Ieronhienhá:wi also taught at the Karihwanoron and Karonhianónhnha Schools. "At those schools, I only spoke Kanien'keha to the students. When I got to Kateri, one of the challenges I faced was adapting to the little Kanien'keha they had. The Mohawk lessons are two times a week for forty-five minutes. I have to use more visuals in my teaching."

Along with her teaching duties, Ieronhienhá:wi also continued a traditional singing group at Kateri School. "They are pushing themselves to learn more of the language and they seem to be more connected to who we are." In the last school year, the singing group consisted of about eighteen students. They've performed at Kateri Hospital, Turtle Bay Elders Lodge, Step-by-Step the Cultural Center's radio show, socials at the Longhouse, at the Kateri School graduation, the Mohawk Language Variety Show, and were invited to the L.E.A.R.N Intercultural Day in Montreal.

"I believe that what is given to you should be shared. The singing group has sung to the little children at Step By Step, and some KSS students have come to help out with our singing group. We have connected



Ieronhienhá:wi Tatum McComber: Photo by Tyson Phillips

with different age levels within the community." Ieronhienhá:wi and Kanen'tó:kon Hemlock—along with some students from KSS—continued with the singing group through a summer program with the Cultural Center.

Children learned there is more to our culture than just singing. "One parent told me it was a great positive change for her son. When I hear that, I feel very proud to see the younger generation trying to keep our language and traditions alive and that I played a part in helping them achieve that goal."

## Continued from page 10

If you have any questions or would like to take part in the *Kids in the Middle* program—designed for parents who are recently going through a divorce or separation, please contact the Family and

Wellness Center at 450-638-0408.

Our children's well being and *healthy spirit* are the responsibility of both parents.

Remember, your children do better in *school* and feel more confident when they have the love and support of *both their parents!*

Source: *Parenting After Separation/Divorce*. BC Council for Families. 2006.

# The Back Page...

“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.”

– Tatanka Iyotaka (Sitting Bull) Chief of the Lakota Sioux

## Seven Ways to Nutritious School Days

by CHANTAL HADDAD, KMHC NUTRITIONIST



School days are fast approaching and soon we'll be running to the store for school supplies and sorting through our children's clothes to see if anything still fits. With so much to do, the thought of fruits and vegetables may not be on your mind. However, nutrition should be on the top of your back to school list.

Healthy eating habits can improve your child's performance at school as well as his overall well-being. Below are seven easy tips to get you and your family on your way to healthy eating.

- 1: *Show your children how to eat well:* If you expect your children to eat well, then you have to show them how. Set a good example for your family by making healthy eating a lifestyle, not just a fad.
- 2: *Make mealtime family time:* Try to have at least one meal a day together. Eating meals as a family can actually improve your children's food habits since kids tend to eat more fruits, vegetables and dairy foods at meals shared with their parents. So turn off the TV, put down the newspaper and enjoy delicious meals together.
- 3: *Get the family involved in meal planning and preparation:* Cooking together is a great learning opportunity for your children; give them

simple, age appropriate tasks to help out. Children are more likely to eat foods that they have helped prepare.

- 4: *Try something new:* Set a goal to include one new food or recipe each week. Soon, you'll discover new favorites to incorporate into your menus. Don't force your children to try new food if they don't want to. If they see you enjoying it, they will eventually want to try it too.
- 5: *Start the day with breakfast:* Children who eat breakfast do better in school. To start your children off on the right foot for the day, give oatmeal, whole grain toast, eggs, or yogurt, which will keep them satisfied until lunch. And don't forget to sit down to eat with them.
- 6: *Plan nutritious snacks:* Children are usually hungry right after school.

Have a nutritious snack planned so that they don't just grab whatever they can.

- 7: *Make time for some physical activity every day:* Physical activity helps both adults and children to relax and balance out the day's food intake. It is also a great way to spend time together.

Feeding your family well is a vital part of parenting, but it doesn't have to be a struggle. Just make one small change at a time and remember that children will copy their parents, so the right eating habits must start with you.

### August is...

1-7 World Breastfeeding Week

### September is...

12-20 AIDS Walk for Life  
9 FASD Awareness Day  
13 Terry Fox Run  
21 World Alzheimer's Day  
25 Terry Fox Natl. School Run Day  
28 World Heart Day

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

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