



# *Family Connections*

A resource booklet about bonding with your child  
for First Nations and Métis parents in BC



## **In this issue:**

» **Bonding with  
Your Child**

» **Forming a Secure  
Attachment**

» **Connections  
with Family  
and Community**

# Thank you

With the generous contributions of the Credit Unions of B.C, Success By 6 is pleased to provide this booklet as part of the series of four (4) Childhood Health and Wellness resource booklets.

Also available and funded by Credit Unions is the First Steps and Beyond booklet developed by Success By 6.

The Childhood Health and Wellness resource booklets have been re-printed with the permission of the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH) who are the original creators and copyright holders of the 4 booklets and to whom we extend our sincere appreciation. For more information about these organizations please visit [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca) and [www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca)

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We say "Thank you" using some of the Aboriginal languages from across BC and Canada in recognition of the strength and diversity of the Indigenous people who are our friends, families and neighbours.

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# How Was This Resource Developed?

This series of resources is a response to a growing interest in parenting information for First Nations and Métis parents in BC. The resources share important parenting information. See the back cover for more themes in the series.

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First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness



NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE  
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

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**nk'essi'**  
means I love you in  
Nadleh Whut'en

# Introduction

This booklet will help you learn about attachment and bonding. It tells you what these are, why they are important, and what you can do. This booklet includes information about how you can be the parent your child needs. It also shares the importance of strong connections with extended family and community. At the end of this booklet you will find resources and services for your family.

Learning parenting skills early will help you and your baby. Attachment and bonding develop in the first years of life and have an impact throughout life. This booklet will help you learn how you can strengthen the connection with your child.



*You are home to your child,  
the anchor that keeps  
him/her safe and secure.*



*Traditionally, parenting was taught throughout life and parents formed strong attachments with their children. Parenting was learned first as babies, then as children, later as parents, and then as grandparents.*

# Bonding with Your Child

Bonding is the connection that forms between parents and their babies in the first few days of life. Over time parents can do things to strengthen this bond, such as caring for their children and playing with their children. Here are some things you can do to strengthen the bond with your child:

## Respond to your child

For example:

- Watch your child. Turn off the television and computer, and put away your cell phone.
- Learn your child's cues. How does your child act when he/she is tired or hungry?
- Respond to your child's needs in a caring way.
- Play with your child.
- Recognize your child's feelings. For example, ask, "Are you sad? Do you want a hug?"

## Be close to your child

For example:

- Respond in a positive way to your child by using kind and loving words.
- Use a gentle and caring voice. Get close so you don't have to raise your voice.
- Use actions that show how much you cherish your child.
- Touch and hold your child.
- Be available when your child is stressed, upset or hurt.
- Focus on your child by giving your child attention.



*Xwexwistsín!  
means I love you in  
Secwepemc*

## Be committed to your child

For example:

- Be consistent with routines and expectations.
- Repeat things, as needed.
- Know what to expect from your child at different ages.
- Use a positive approach. Teach your child instead of punishing your child.
- Keep your child safe by making sure that your house is safe, that you are close by when outside, and that only safe people are in your child's life.

## Learn how to interact with your child

For example:

- Take turns choosing a game.
- Respond to your child and ask your child to respond to you.
- Know your child's temperament. Be respectful of his/her wants and needs.



# Forming a Secure Attachment

Traditionally, parents saw themselves as being entrusted with the spirit of the child. Children were sacred gifts and loved unconditionally. They were tended to immediately and were always comforted when they cried. As a result, children had strong roots to their family and community. They knew who they were and knew their place in society.

## A secure attachment is different from bonding

A secure attachment forms as parents respond quickly to their young children when they are distressed, in an appropriate way. Helping your child develop a secure attachment is one of the most important things you can do as a parent. It becomes the foundation for all relationships in your child's life. It is how children see themselves in the world. A secure attachment helps a child learn to manage their emotions and behaviour (self-regulation), and to bounce back from difficult situations (resilience).



## Benefits of attachment

When a child has a secure attachment with a caring adult, there are tremendous benefits to the family and child. Attachment helps children to:

- Handle stress.
- Learn new things.
- Solve problems.
- Develop self-control.
- Trust others.
- Develop caring relationships.
- Seek help when needed.
- Be confident and independent.
- Feel good about themselves.

## Forming a secure attachment is something all parents can learn to do

It is as simple as responding quickly and in a caring way when your child needs you. Here are some ways you can do this:

- Pick up your baby when he/she cries.
- Comfort your child when he/she is hurt, sad, or frightened.
- Protect your child when he/she is in danger.
- Encourage your child when he/she is frustrated.

# Connections with Family and Community

Connecting your child with extended family and community will help your child have a sense of belonging. You can do this in many ways such as:

## Connect with extended family

- Tell your child stories about family members.
- Have family meals or events that include extended family.
- Show your child pictures of family members.

## Build ties with community

- Participate in community events such as feasts and pow wows.
- Talk about your traditional lands and about traditional ways.
- Learn from Elders.
- Practice traditions such as drumming or singing.
- Teach your child words from your First Nations or Métis language.

## Growing connections

Imagine a rubber band as the bond between you and your child. When your baby is first born, the rubber band is new and strong. Your baby stays close to you, relying entirely on you for every need.

As your baby grows, the rubber band naturally gets bigger. The distance between you and your child grows too. As your baby begins to move, the distance may grow to 1 or 2 metres before your baby needs to feel close to you again. Your baby will explore a bit further and further as he/she crawls and then walks. The distance grows with each new phase in your baby's development.

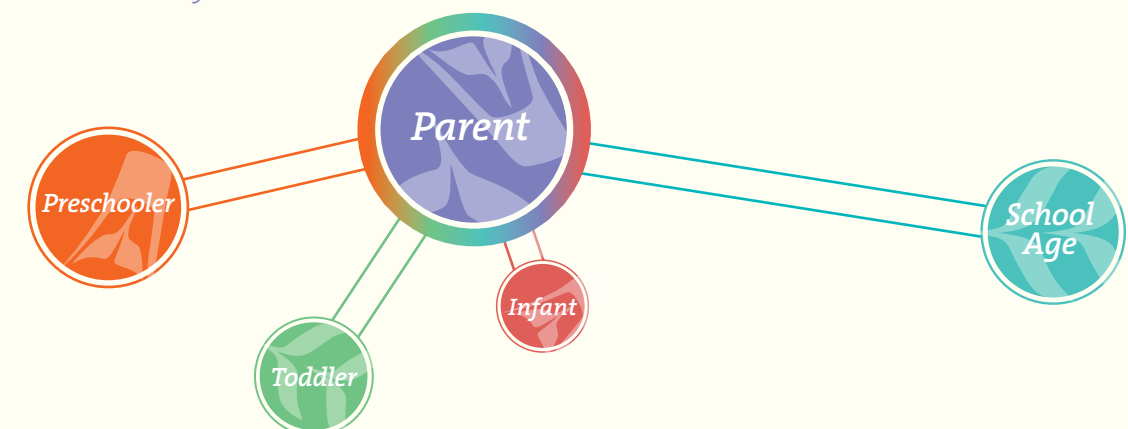
When you respond to your baby's needs, your baby learns that you provide safety and security. The connection with your child remains strong. If parents do not respond to their baby's needs, the baby will begin to feel unsafe, insecure and untrusting. The connection becomes weak and the rubber band breaks down.

If your child has developed a secure attachment with you, your child will know that he/she can turn to you for help, at any age. The rubber band may be small or large, but your child will know that you will be a support if they are distressed.

Fathers, mothers, other family members and community all have important connections with their children. To learn more about being a father, see the booklet *Fatherhood is Forever*.

*"In First Nations communities, there is often a connectedness that is not present in the larger society. Children have multiple attachment relationships and this is a strength that First Nations people may be able to draw upon."*

– Hanna Scrivens, FASD Coordinator, Intertribal Health Authority, Nanaimo



# Becoming the Parent Your Child Needs

## Healing

For many parents, bonding with their child is as natural as breathing. For others this bonding may grow through spending time with their child, being close to one another. Some parents find it hard to form a strong bond with their children.

In the past, laws stopped First Nations and Métis parents from passing on their beliefs, language and culture to their children. Parents and children were separated. Children were in the care of people who didn't love or cherish them. Generations of children were told that they had no value. Some of these children grew up to believe it. Many passed these teachings to their children and grandchildren. Some turned to alcohol and drugs to numb the pain of isolation and abuse.

Bonding can be more challenging for families affected by addiction, foster care, special needs such as FASD, trauma, or residential school. This cycle can end. Family circles can be repaired and families can become healthy and strong again. See the section on this page called Getting Help for people who can help.



## Self-care

Your child will mainly turn to you to meet his/her needs. This can feel like a big responsibility, but the rewards are enormous. You can turn to a number of different people to meet your own emotional needs, such as a partner, friend, parent or counsellor.

How did you feel when you found out you were pregnant? Happy? Worried? Trapped? And when you saw your baby for the first time? Joyful? Scared? Numb? These feelings tell you a lot about how you were raised and how you feel about yourself and your current life situation.

In order to love and nurture your baby, you need to love and nurture yourself. To do this you need to find people who love, value and support you. Avoid people who hurt you and your feelings. To learn more about physical activity and healthy eating see *Growing Up Healthy*.

## Getting help

Get the help you need. There may be parenting support programs in your community or counseling resources that can help with parenting, healing or self-care. For more information about services, see the resources at the end of this booklet or call:

- Healthlink BC  
Phone: 8-1-1

*“Find things about your kids that bring you joy and let them see it in your eyes, because each child needs someone who thinks they are absolutely wonderful.”*

*– Hanna Scrivens, FASD Coordinator,  
Intertribal Health Authority, Nanaimo*

## Postpartum depression

All parents have some hard days, for example when they are tired or worried. On these days it is more difficult to be the parent you want to be. Depression is hard on parents and can make it more difficult for parents to respond to their baby's needs on an ongoing basis.

About 4 out of 5 mothers have the baby blues. They can cause mothers to feel sad, tired, overwhelmed and irritable. Baby blues are caused by changes to the body, eating, sleeping patterns, emotions and social situations that happen after the birth of a baby. Baby blues may last for a few days or up to 2 weeks after your baby is born.

If the symptoms last for more than 2 weeks, you may have a postpartum mood disorder (this used to be called postpartum depression). It affects 1 out of 5 mothers. Some of the signs of postpartum mood disorders include:

- Don't feel like yourself.
- Feeling sad and tearful.
- Feeling tired, but can't sleep.
- Feeling overwhelmed and can't focus.
- Not feeling joy or pleasure.
- Feeling hopeless or frustrated.
- Feeling like you're not connecting with your baby.
- Afraid to be alone with your baby.
- Having thoughts about harming yourself or harming your baby.



*Even if you did not have the parenting that you wanted or needed, you can become the parent your child needs.*



For more information on postpartum mood disorders:

- Contact your doctor, midwife, or community health nurse
- Help for BC women with postpartum mood disorders  
[www.bcmhas.ca/ProgramsServices/ChildYouthMentalHealth/ProgramsServices/Reproductive+Mental+Health/Resources](http://www.bcmhas.ca/ProgramsServices/ChildYouthMentalHealth/ProgramsServices/Reproductive+Mental+Health/Resources)
- **Feeling Blue**  
[www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca/feeling-blue](http://www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca/feeling-blue)
- **The Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC**  
Toll-free distress line: 1 800 SUICIDE or 1 800 784 2433

Postpartum mood disorders affect mothers, children and families. Ask for help right away if you have thoughts of harming yourself or your baby. If you have a postpartum mood disorder:

- It is not your fault.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Find other people who can help you take care of your baby while you get help.

# What You Can Do

## during pregnancy

### Connect with your unborn baby

Your unborn baby responds to touch, sounds, light and taste. Throughout pregnancy, create a loving space for your baby. Use caring and loving thoughts when thinking about your baby. Encourage your partner to get to know your unborn baby. Sing, read and talk to your baby. Choose music that inspires or celebrates. Tell traditional stories or jokes. Speak your First Nations or Métis language if you know it, or ask someone to talk to your baby, near your belly. Touch or rub your tummy.

*“In the first months after he was born I always had the feeling I had no idea what I was doing. I read a lot of parenting books because I got home from the hospital and discovered I didn’t have the faintest idea how to get a baby to fall asleep. I didn’t have any family around when my baby was born and my friends didn’t have babies. I had missed all that baby talk. This was the priority in the beginning, then getting enough sleep and then getting fit again. I joined a few groups and made a lot of nice new friends all with babies the same age as mine. I have people to talk to and help me. We have a good time.”*

— Monica Pinette, Métis Olympic pentathlete from British Columbia



*Connecting starts before birth. Let your baby know you care, even before they arrive!*



## 0 to 6 months

### Welcome your baby

When your baby is born, welcome your baby and celebrate his/her arrival.

### Respond to your baby’s needs

Your baby relies on you for every need. Show your love for your baby. Pick up your baby when he/she reaches his/her arms out to you. Copy the happy noises your baby is making. Share smiles and show you care. Let your baby know you will be there when needed. It will give your baby the confidence to explore and learn.

### Comfort your baby

Comfort your baby, especially when sick, hurt or upset. Be there when your baby is sad, lonely or frightened. You can’t spoil your baby by picking him/her up too often. Babies cry to let you know that they need you. Always comfort your baby when he/she is upset. It will help your baby learn that you will be there when needed.

One of the hardest times for a new parent is when their baby won’t stop crying. Some babies cry more than others. Babies cry when they are hungry, scared, overtired, teething, need to be burped or need a diaper change. Babies don’t cry to annoy you. Babies just need lots of love and attention. Here are some things you can do to comfort your baby:

- Check to see if your baby needs to be burped or needs a clean diaper.
- Check to see if your baby is too warm, or not warm enough.
- Try breast feeding.
- Hold your baby close. Try making a soft and gentle sound such as “shhh, shhh, shhh” over and over. Sounds like this may remind your baby of being in the womb where there is a similar soft and constant sound.



*Babies who are comforted quickly cry less than babies who are not.*

Babies who have special needs or were exposed to drugs or alcohol during pregnancy may cry more than other babies. They may need to be comforted in different ways. Doctors, midwives or community health nurses may have suggestions.

If your baby keeps crying and you begin to feel really upset, take a time-out. Put your baby in a safe place such as his/her crib and shut the door. Walk away for a moment until you are calm. Take a short shower or listen to music. Call a family member or friend and talk about how you feel. They may be able to come over to give you a break. Never shake or hit your baby. If you feel you can’t control your emotions and feel like you might hurt your baby, call:

- Healthlink BC  
Phone: 8-1-1

The crying time will pass. There are videos and tips to help parents cope with crying babies. To learn more about crying, see this online resource:

- Period of Purple Crying  
[www.purplecrying.info](http://www.purplecrying.info)



*keesha kee taen  
means I love you in Michif*

# What You Can Do

## 0 to 6 months

### Stay close to your baby

Your baby was in the womb for 9 months. It was a warm and tight space. It is comforting and familiar for your baby to feel your warmth and your heartbeat. Babies want to be close to their caregiver. Hold your baby. Talk to your baby. Look at your baby. These are good ways to develop a warm relationship with your baby. There are wraps and cradleboards to help keep your baby close and feeling secure.

Keep your baby nearby at night. Your baby should sleep in your room, in a safe crib or bassinet that is approved by the CSA (Canadian Standards Association). To keep your baby safe, put him/her to sleep on his/her back. Make sure there are no bumper pads, pillows, toys or heavy blankets in the crib or bassinet. To learn more about safe sleep for babies, see this fact sheet:

- **Safe Sleep for Babies**  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/pdf/hfile107.pdf](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/pdf/hfile107.pdf)

### Play with your baby

Some people are not sure how to play with their baby. Here are some things to try. Learn from your baby. All babies have things they like and don't like.

- See if your baby will copy you. Try sticking out your tongue, making a circle with your mouth or smacking your lips.
- Tell your baby a story using different sounds and voice, high and low, fast and slow.
- Pretend that you are your baby. What would you say about how you are feeling or what you need? When your baby begins to look hungry, say, "Oooh, I'm so hungry. My tummy hurts and I feel sad. I would tell you but I can't talk, so I'll just cry right now." Then, you can respond, "OK beautiful, I will feed you, hold you and comfort you because I love you so much!"



*There is no such thing as a bad baby or a spoiled baby.*



## 7 to 12 months

Babies' circles widen as they learn to roll over, sit up, crawl and stand. They begin to be able to tell the difference between people they know and strangers. Babies may cry and hold on tight to parents, or turn away from strangers. Babies learn about depth and distance as they drop and throw things.

### Do things together

Grocery shopping can be a great time to learn and connect. There are so many colours, shapes and words. Keep your baby safe by doing up the harness when your baby is in a shopping cart or baby stroller. When shopping, your baby may want everything or may be over stimulated. If you begin buying everything your baby wants, you will set up a pattern that may be hard to break. If your baby cries for something, distract him/her or wait in the car until the crying stops. Let your baby know you understand what he/she wants and that he/she is disappointed.

### Respond to your baby

When your baby is frightened, worried or frustrated, respond in a calm and caring way. It is important for your baby to learn to trust that you will be there when he/she needs you.

### Keep your baby safe

Make sure safe, reliable, caring people are taking care of your baby, if you are not able to. Safety becomes more important as your baby begins to move. All babies need a safe place to explore and learn, for example:

- Remove poisons or cleaners from lower cabinets. If there is no other place to put these products, put safety locks on the cabinet doors.
- Keep bathroom and closet doors closed.
- Put child gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Think about things that your baby will soon be able to reach. Put away things that could break or might hurt your baby. Make sure cords for blinds are out of reach.
- Find out about window safety devices.

For more information on baby proofing your home, talk to staff at your local parent program, Friendship Centre, nursing station or clinic. To learn more, see this online information:

- **Quick Tips: Baby-Proofing Your Home**  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/special/te7335.html](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/special/te7335.html)



*Our Elders have always said our children are a sacred gift from the Creator. Caring for your child begins when you find out you are expecting a baby. The responsibility continues throughout your pregnancy and throughout your child's life.*





# What You Can Do

## 7 to 12 months

### Talk and listen

Your baby is beginning to make more sounds and connect sounds to people and things. Even before they can use words, babies can tell you what they want through sounds, their faces and body language. Can you tell what your baby wants and what your baby is feeling? What are the cues your baby is giving? Talk to your baby. Describe the things and people around them. Talk about what you are doing and what you are going to do.

### Plan your routines

Your baby begins to get into a routine. Routines help your baby feel safe. They know what to expect, and not to worry about what will come next. Try to set a routine around your baby's needs. How much sleep does your baby need? When does your baby get hungry, tired or need to be changed? You help form the routine by doing the same things at the about same time each day. If your baby naps from 1 to 3 each day, then try to plan other activities for the morning.

### Play with your baby

Playing is how babies and children learn. Watch your baby's reaction during games. If your baby likes it, do it again. If your baby turns away, try something else. Follow your baby's lead. Here are some things you can try:

- Teach your baby traditional games and stories.
- Play peek-a-boo by covering your face or hiding a toy. This helps your baby understand that you are nearby, even if he/she can't see you.
- Show your baby how to clap to the music or bang on a drum.
- Try to imitate your baby so he/she learns that communication goes both ways.
- Sing songs that teach about body parts.
- Sing songs and tell stories in your First Nations or Métis language, if you can.



*Give your baby attention  
and time, not things  
he/she does not need.*

## 1 to 3 years

The toddler years (1 to 3 years of age) bring huge changes. Toddlers learn to talk. They begin to discover their own power by saying no and by seeing what happens when they do something. They want to explore and do things themselves. Toddlers are busy people. Parents can enjoy taking a fresh look at the world through a toddler's eyes.

### Talk with your toddler

Toddlers are great mimics. They will say and do exactly what you say and do. Sometimes this can be quite eye opening for parents. It can also be a great time to role model good choices and healthy living. To learn more about healthy children, see the booklet *Growing Up Healthy*. It is also a good time to think carefully about the words that you use.

Parents often say to their children what they heard from their own parents. The words and emotions just come out without thought. In order to change your words, you need to listen to what comes out and when. Is this what you wanted to tell your child? If not, stop right there and change it. It may feel weird or uncomfortable. That is okay and normal. Eventually, it will feel normal and good to speak only kind and loving words to your child.

If you find that you are having a hard time being kind and loving toward your child, seek help. All parents can benefit from support and information about parenting. See the last page of this booklet for resources to help support parents.



*Laugh as often as you can  
as laughter is good medicine  
for both of you.*

what is said	what children hear	what can be said instead
"Get out of my way."	"I'm a bother. They don't want me. They would be better off without me."	"Sit here, while I do this. You are such a good helper and a good listener."
"Why are you crying? Stop acting like a baby."	"I shouldn't have feelings. Hide them. I am not safe."	"I see that you are upset. Come sit with me and I'll comfort you."
"Shut up."	"No one cares about me or what I say."	"Can you play a quiet game for a bit? I want to hear what you are saying, but I have to listen to someone else right now. Your turn is next."
"I told you not to do that. You are bad!"	"I am bad, worthless. I can't do anything right. I am a burden."	"I'm afraid you might get hurt. Here's what we can do to keep you safe..."

# What You Can Do

## 1 to 3 years

### Be consistent

As parents and caregivers, it is important to agree on what you expect from your child. If one parent says yes and the other says no, it confuses your child. Parents and caregivers should agree on what is and isn't okay. Decide when, if ever, certain things are allowed, such as having a treat, watching TV, or playing computer games. Talk about issues and limits before something happens. For parents who have never had limits when they were a child, it can be hard to say no. By planning for challenges before they happen, you can be prepared and act calmly.

### Be positive

Parents need to agree on what should be disciplined and how. Discipline should not hurt your child physically, emotionally or spiritually. Teach your child, instead of punishing your child. Hurting your child makes your child mistrust you or become afraid of you. To learn more about healthy discipline, see the booklet *Parents as First Teachers*.

Children's brains are growing and developing. Things that make perfect sense to you, don't make any sense to children. They can get frustrated and angry, causing bursts of emotion or tantrums. It is okay for children to be upset, but not okay to hurt someone else or themselves as a result. Help your child to find ways to express emotions without being hurtful.

Do you both need a few minutes to calm down? What tools can you use – breathing, quiet time or taking a break? Each meltdown is an opportunity for you to share a new coping tool. Create a safe space for your child to relax or give a gentle head or back massage. Try to see things from your child's point of view. Sometimes it is as simple as a child needing a nap. Other times it may be that too much is going on. Sometimes children sense their parent's stress long before the parents. Try to be aware of your own stress level. Learn how to cope with stress, and to minimize the impact on your child.



*"If you can give your son or daughter only one gift, let it be enthusiasm."*

– Bruce Barton

### Comfort your toddler

As children get older, they become more aware of their surroundings. They may be fearful about sleeping alone. Help your child feel safe by providing comfort and easing fears. Name-calling and yelling do not ease fears. They just teach children to keep their fears to themselves and that they are alone in handling their fears. Ask your child, "What makes you feel safe?" Explain common household noises or help your child to identify noises. Special toys can provide comfort at sleeping times. Monitor any television shows or movies as toddlers have difficulty separating reality and imagination. The content may make your toddler frightened, or your child may copy unwanted behaviour. Most importantly, when your child is afraid, believe your child, listen and comfort him/her. You are your child's secure base.

### Play with your toddler

This is a wonderful stage to teach patience, empathy and sharing. To get more ideas, see the booklet *Parents as First Teachers*.

### Games that teach patience

- Hide and seek – Hide a toy or several toys, and then search for the toys together.
- Have a race – Create a starting place and have your child wait for your cue to start the race. The race ends with you as the finish line. You can give praise for waiting. Restart the race if your child takes off too soon.
- Plant something together and watch it grow. It is fun to grow beans or herbs for the kitchen.

### Games that teach empathy

- Using puppets or toys, ask, "How would it feel if one puppet took another puppet's toy? How would it feel if one puppet hit another puppet? What can they do to play together with kindness?"
- Make faces and have your child guess the emotion. Ask what would make someone feel this way.
- When reading books together, ask questions about how the characters are feeling and why they chose to do what they did.



### Games that teach sharing

- Toy exchange – Have your child pick out a few toys and hand them to you and others. After having the toy for a few minutes, let them know it is time to trade toys. Each person can take turns choosing who gets what toy. Make sure that each person gets a chance to have each toy.
- Hot potato – Pretend a toy or ball is too hot to touch and must be passed on as soon as possible.
- Play games where people have to take turns.



**siip'in'**  
*means to love somebody  
in Nisga'a*

# What You Can Do

## 4 to 6 years

The preschool and school years (4 to 6 years of age) are a time of learning, growing and going places. Some parents find it hard to imagine their child going to school, outside of their care. Others had to let go earlier due to work. Friends and teachers become a part of your child's expanding world with stories and experiences outside of home.

### Learn about discipline

Children want to please their parents. They also need to learn and explore. Children learn about limits, and about what happens when they test the limits. Often it is more useful to guide children's energy into wanted behaviour, rather than disciplining unwanted behaviour. For example, energetic children can be taken to the park to play ball, instead of feeling restless at home.

### Teach responsibility

Help your child understand what his/her role is in the family. Talk about what happens if someone doesn't do their job. Make sure jobs fit with what your child is capable of doing such as picking up clothes and putting them in a hamper, putting toys into a toy bin, sorting socks, or setting the table. Show your child how to do the chores. Be specific when you ask your child to do a task. Instead of telling your child to clean up, tell your child to put the stuffed animals in the toy box. Remember, your children generally do the best they can because they want to please you.

*"If we have a twinkle in our eye and some warmth in our voice, we invite a connection that most children will not turn down. When we give children signs that they matter to us, most children will want to hold on to the knowledge that they are special to us and are appreciated in our life."*

— Gordon Neufeld, Vancouver Psychologist,  
in *Hold on to Your Kids*

### Talk about feelings


This is a great time to help children learn how to solve problems. They are learning about their own feelings. They can also learn to identify the feelings in others. Here are some questions you can ask your child to help him/her understand feelings:

- How do you think that person is feeling?
- What do you think that person needs?
- What do you need when you feel that way?
- Who can help if you are feeling that way?

### Play with your child

Play is important in preschool and school age children. Here are some suggestions:

- Let your child choose the game and take the lead.
- Shake the sillies out – Sing and dance to get out excess energy and help your child focus.
- Animal matching game – Decide on 3 animals. Stand back to back. Choose 1 of the 3 animals. Say ready, set, go. Turn around and act out the animal. See how many times you and your child match.
- Make up a special handshake or greeting.

  
**nyuk'enusi'**  
*means I love you  
in Dakelh*

# How You Can Learn More

**Aboriginal Friendship Centres** often have programs for pregnant women, parents and children.  
Phone: 250 388 5522 or  
Toll-Free: 1 800 990 2432  
[www.bcaafc.com](http://www.bcaafc.com)

**Aboriginal Infant Development Programs** work together with families to support the growth and development of young children.  
Phone: 250 388 5593  
[www.aidp.bc.ca](http://www.aidp.bc.ca)

**BC Aboriginal Head Start Programs** support early childhood development, school readiness and family health and wellness for children from birth to six years old.  
Phone: 250 858 4543  
[www.bcfhns.org](http://www.bcfhns.org) for on-reserve programs  
[www.ahsabc.net](http://www.ahsabc.net) for urban programs

**BC Council for Families** is a source of dependable, current information and advice including parenting programs, online information, and online discussion groups for parents. They have articles about attachment.  
[www.bccf.ca/families](http://www.bccf.ca/families)

**BC Ministry of Health** has an online guide to all the toll-free resources in BC.  
[www.health.gov.bc.ca/navigation/1-800.html](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/navigation/1-800.html)

**Best Chance** is an online resource for parents.  
[www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bestchance.gov.bc.ca)

**Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program** and **Community Action Program for Children** programs begin during pregnancy and go up to early childhood. Many of the programs have help for breastfeeding, nutrition, food preparation, and also offer resources to help families.  
[www.capc-pace.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.capc-pace.phac-aspc.gc.ca)  
[www.cpnpcpnp.phac-aspc.gc.ca](http://www.cpnpcpnp.phac-aspc.gc.ca)

**First Nations Parents Clubs** help support parents to help with educational success.  
Phone: 604 925 6087 or  
Toll-Free: 1 877 422 3672  
[www.fnsa.ca/parentsclub](http://www.fnsa.ca/parentsclub)

**Healthlink BC** directory has information about how and where to find health services in BC.  
Phone: 8-1-1

**Healthy Baby Healthy Brain** is a parent website about early brain development.  
[www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca](http://www.healthybabyhealthybrain.ca)

**Local Libraries** may have books about parenting and child development.  
[www.bclibraries.ca](http://www.bclibraries.ca)

**Métis Community Service Society of BC** provides services for parents.  
Phone: 250 868 0351  
[www.mcsbc.org](http://www.mcsbc.org)

**National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health** is a source of reliable, current information on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis child, youth, and family health.  
[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&searchCat=1](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&searchCat=1)

**Pregnancy Outreach Programs** are located throughout BC.  
Phone: 604 314 8797  
[www.bcapop.ca/programs](http://www.bcapop.ca/programs)

**Preschoolers: Building a Sense of Security** fact sheet by BC Healthlink.  
[www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/special/ta7012.html](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/kb/content/special/ta7012.html)



**min-sipsiip'in(t)**  
*means to love each other  
in Nisga'a*

# Success By 6 Credit Union Partners

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*Central 1 Credit Union*  
*Aldergrove Credit Union*  
*BlueShore Financial*  
*Bulkley Valley Credit Union*  
*CCEC Credit Union*  
*Coast Capital Savings Credit Union*  
*Coastal Community Credit Union*  
*Columbia Valley Credit Union*  
*Community Savings Credit Union*  
*Compensation Employees Credit Union*  
*Creston and District Credit Union*  
*East Kootenay Community Credit Union*  
*Enderby & District Financial*  
*Envision Financial*  
*First Credit Union*  
*G & F Financial Group*  
*Grand Forks District Credit Union*  
*Greater Vancouver Community Credit Union*  
*Heritage Credit Union*  
*Integris Credit Union*  
*Interior Savings*

*Island Savings Credit Union*  
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*Lake View Credit Union*  
*Mt. Lehman Credit Union*  
*Nelson & District Credit Union*  
*North Peace Savings & Credit Union*  
*Northern Savings Credit Union*  
*Osoyoos Credit Union*  
*Prospera Credit Union*  
*Revelstoke Credit Union*  
*Salmon Arm Savings Credit Union*  
*Sharons Credit Union*  
*Spruce Credit Union*  
*Summerland & District Credit Union*  
*Sunshine Coast Credit Union*  
*V.P. Credit Union*  
*Valley First*  
*Vancity Savings Credit Union*  
*Vancouver Firefighters Credit Union*  
*Vantage One Credit Union*  
*Westminster Savings Credit Union*  
*Williams Lake & District Credit Union*

Success By 6



The booklets in this series include:



## Fatherhood is Forever

This booklet about fathering is for First Nations and Métis parents in BC.



## Growing Up Healthy

This booklet about healthy children is for First Nations and Métis parents in BC.



## Family Connections

This booklet about bonding with your child is for First Nations and Métis parents in BC.



## Parents as First Teachers

This booklet about how children learn is for First Nations and Métis parents in BC.

You can view all of the English booklets online at [www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca) or at [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

Aussi disponibles en français: [www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca)

For more information:

  
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Health through wellness

501-100 Park Royal South  
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2  
604 913 2080  
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[www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca)

  
NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE  
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

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Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9  
250 960 5250  
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[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca)