

Advisor

Winter 2024



50 years
1974-2024

Families Helping Families

Child Traumatic Stress

Foster Corner

Damage Compensation

Benefits of Journaling

Beginners Guide to TBRI

Evermore Centre Resources

Kid Safe Search Engines



www.saskfosterfamilies.ca

Advisor

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231 Robin Crescent
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 6M8
Phone: (306) 975-1580
Fax: (306) 975-1581
Toll Free: 1-888-276-2880
E-mail: sffa@sffa.sk.ca
Website: www.saskfosterfamilies.ca

OUR MISSION

The Saskatchewan Foster Families Association exists to support and encourage Foster families through education and advocacy, helping create healthy homes, positive environments, and brighter futures for children and youth across the province.

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A Message from the Executive Director

HAPPY NEW YEAR from the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association!

Each year I like to reflect on the past year to think about lessons learned and how going forward we can continue to support families. Foster families play such a key role in our community, children and families rely on caregivers to step up when needed to provide out of home care. Our team at the Provincial Office is dedicated to support you as caregivers and promoting better outcomes for the children and their families.

I would like to welcome all new families who have completed their PRIDE Pre-service training and are now approved foster parents and thank you to all those families that have moved on or retired from fostering.

Earlier this year we contracted with two (2) experienced interviewers to conduct exit interviews with families that had left fostering since 2020. There was a total of fifty (50) randomly selected families interviewed throughout the province. Why did we do this?? We wanted to gain a better understanding of why people were choosing to leave fostering.

The report "Our Voices" was complete in the spring of 2023 and was presented to the Minister of Social Services and Executive leadership within the Ministry. There was a total of five (5) main themes and twenty (20) sub-themes that



“2024 marks an important milestone for the SFFA, we will be celebrating our 50th year of formation as an organization.”

were the recommendations that were presented for changes that were needed regarding the Ministry. We are actively working with the Ministry on those recommendations and an action plan has been developed for our work going forward.

From the report there were five (5) recommendations for the SFFA, and they were as follows:

- Let their (the SFFA) services be known
- Provide Advocacy
- Promote Networks
- Assist in Cultural Connections
- Provide Information

We have reviewed the recommendations and have scheduled and planned meetings throughout the province to meet

with families that are actively fostering. We want to hear what your worries are and to provide information on how we can support members. Also, to provide information on what we are actively working on with the ministry. Please try to join us for a cup of coffee when we visit your area, we need to hear from you!

Plans are well under way for this year's Provincial Conference Pre-Conference being held September 26-28, 2024 at Whitecap Dakota First Nation (26 KM south of Saskatoon). 2024 marks an important milestone for the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association, we will be celebrating our fiftieth (50) year of formation as an organization. Please watch for information on the upcoming conference and celebrations.

Lastly, I would like to thank our Provincial Board of Directors for their support, to the SFFA Team who works tirelessly to support families in their role from within the office or as direct support to your homes. THANK YOU to you, our Foster Parents for everything you do to support children and their families! You are why we as an association are passionate about what we do and will continue to advocate for supports and services to strengthen our foster care program. Let us continue our work together with families helping families.

Deb Davies

Executive Director

SFFA Training Course Winter Schedule



Please watch your emails for registration for the below courses being offered to Foster Parents. For more information, please contact **Tessa** at **306-975-1528**.

Foster Parent College Courses:

Courses are available to all members. Please watch your email each month for the featured course or contact the SFFA Training Coordinator **Tessa Stock** at **306-975-1528** or **Tessa@sffa.sk.ca** for more information.

JANUARY

"Could it be FASD"

This class explores parenting children with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders(FASD), including:

- Signs and symptoms
- Evaluation and making a diagnosis
- Learning and behavioural issues
- Parenting strategies

FEBRUARY

"Escalating Behaviour Unwrapped"

This class explores escalation and de-escalation, including:

- The "thinking brain" vs the "survival brain"
- The escalation cycle
- De-escalation strategies

MARCH

"Sleep Problems"

This course explores four types of sleep problems in children:

- Fears about sleeping alone
- Frequent waking and roaming
- Nightmares and night terrors
- Sleep problems and depression



Let's stay connected...

We regularly send out e-mails to our foster parents. To be added to our contact list and receive the latest news, please send your e-mail address to **keanna@sffa.sk.ca**

Theraplay

Presented by David Ambrose, founder of Theraplay Pediatric Services

February 20th Theraplay Pediatric Services Sensory Processing Session, 7pm - 8:30pm

In this 90 minute presentation, David will cover basic background information on sensory processing, including the Dunn model of sensory processing, will be presented. Different patterns of sensory processing needs will be explored. Participants will have the opportunity to practice low-cost, easily-planned sensory activities that support sensory needs.

February 22nd Theraplay Pediatric Services Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation, 7pm - 8:30pm

In this 90 minute presentation, basic background information and tools on Self- and co- regulation, including what self- and co- regulation is, what influences self-regulation, and how to support self- and co- regulation and information on how to manage challenging behaviours in children.

Grief & Loss

January 15th, 2024 7pm - 8pm

Presented by Deb Mooney, SEP (Registered Social Worker and Somatic Experiencing Practitioner) with Simplicity Counselling Services (SCS).

Deb will cover topics related to Grief & Loss surrounding children entering and exiting care and effects on caregivers and family members. Deb has a unique lens on this topic as she worked many years with the Ministry of Social Services in several roles before branching into her own practice. Deb is also a contracted counsellor with Victim Services and Non-Insured Health Benefits for First Nations and Inuit peoples, completed inter-provincial assessments for organizations and partnered with Valiant Recovery Treatment and Recovery Center for aftercare counselling so has a variety of experiences and resources to assist individuals in their healing journey's.

Opioid Poison Response

**January 22nd, 1pm - 3pm
and 7pm - 9pm**

Hosted in partnership with St. Johns Ambulance

Opioid Poisoning Response Training: Trauma-informed and destigmatized approach to opioid poisoning awareness. This includes information on stigma & harm reduction, how to respond to an opioid poisoning, how to administer nasal naloxone, and self-care for the responder after a traumatic event.



**SASKATCHEWAN
FOSTER FAMILIES**

Save
THE DATE

**SFFA Conference
September 26-28, 2024
Saskatoon, SK**

Recognizing and Responding to Child Traumatic Stress



Learn to recognize the signs of traumatic stress, its impact on children, treatment options, and how families and caregivers can help

Types of traumatic events

Childhood traumatic stress occurs when violent or dangerous events overwhelm a child's or adolescent's ability to cope.

Traumatic events may include:

- Neglect and psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- Natural disasters, terrorism, and community and school violence
- Witnessing or experiencing intimate partner violence
- Commercial sexual exploitation
- Serious accidents, life-threatening illness, or sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Refugee and war experiences
- Military family-related stressors, such as parental deployment, loss, or injury

In one nationally representative sample of young people ages 12 to 17:

- 8% reported a lifetime prevalence of sexual assault
- 17% reported physical assault
- 39% reported witnessing violence

- Also, many reported experiencing multiple and repeated traumatic events.

It is important to learn how traumatic events affect children. The more you know, the more you will understand the reasons for certain behaviors and emotions and be better prepared to help children and their families cope. Learn more about the types of trauma and violence and types of disasters.

Signs of child traumatic stress

The signs of traumatic stress are different in each child. Young children react differently than older children.

Preschool Children

- Fearing separation from parents or caregivers
- Crying and/or screaming a lot
- Eating poorly and losing weight
- Having nightmares

Elementary School Children

- Becoming anxious or fearful
- Feeling guilt or shame

- Having a hard time concentrating
- Having difficulty sleeping

Middle and High School Children

- Feeling depressed or alone
- Developing eating disorders and self-harming behaviors
- Beginning to abuse alcohol or drugs
- Becoming sexually active

For some children, these reactions can interfere with daily life and their ability to function and interact with others.

Impact of child traumatic stress

The impact of child traumatic stress can last well beyond childhood. In fact, research shows that child trauma survivors are more likely to have:

- Learning problems, including lower grades and more suspensions and expulsions
- Increased use of health services, including mental health services
- Increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems
- Long term health problems, such as diabetes and heart disease

Trauma is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders.

What families and caregivers can do to help

Not all children experience child traumatic stress after experiencing a traumatic event, but those who do can recover. With proper support, many children are able to adapt to and overcome such experiences.

As a family member or other caring adult, you can play an important role. Remember to:

- Assure the child that he or she is safe. Talk about the measures you are taking to get the child help and keep him or her safe at home and school.
- Explain to the child that he or she is not responsible for what happened. Children often blame themselves for events, even those events that are completely out of their control.
- Be patient. There is no correct timetable for healing. Some children will recover quickly. Others recover more slowly. Try to be supportive and reassure the child that he or she does not need to feel guilty or bad about any feelings or thoughts.

Treatment for child traumatic stress

Even with the support of family members and others, some children do not recover on their own. When needed, a mental health professional trained in evidence-based trauma treatment can help children and families cope with the impact of traumatic events and move toward recovery.

Effective treatments like trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapies are available. There are a number of evidence-based and promising practices to address child traumatic stress.

Each child's treatment depends on the nature, timing, and amount of exposure to a trauma.

Families and caregivers should ask their pediatrician, family physician, school counselor, or clergy member for a referral to a mental health professional and discuss available treatment options.

Source: <https://www.samhsa.gov>

Nine times out of ten, the story behind the misbehavior won't make you angry; it will break your heart.

– Annette Breaux



Being a foster parent is a unique experience for each family

Foster mother Lorraine has been taking children into her home for 28 years – all ages. Lorraine, whose family lives in Sanford, Man., also worked in the system as a support worker. Being in the field made her decide to do more and become a foster mother – so she took in her first foster child, who was seven at the time. For Lorraine, foster care is in the family. She also has two siblings who are social workers, one sister who takes in foreign exchange students, along with parents and grandparents who fostered.

From that first seven-year-old, she has opened her home to many other foster children. She remembers a time when between foster children and her own, there were seven children in the house, all under the age of 18, playing hockey. “We spent a lot of time in hockey rinks, let me tell you,” Lorraine laughs.



While she recommends fostering wholeheartedly, it’s “hard on your heart.” In her wealth of experience, Lorraine says that foster parents must understand the true commitment of fostering. “It is for as long as these kids need you.” She says foster parents must let foster children continue to love and have a

relationship with their biological parents, if possible. She often helps them find their biological parents when they become adults.

“ **The kids are not there to meet needs.**”

And fostering should not be done out of a wrong-minded need, Lorraine emphasizes. “Some people take in kids to avoid what’s going on in a marriage. Other times it’s because a couple aren’t able to have children so they want a baby to hold. But the kids are not there to meet needs.”

Now that some of her foster children have grown up, “my boys” as she calls several of them, still come for supper regularly. “Lots of them, I still say connected with...Lots of them want to have a coffee if they have things happening [now that they are adults].”

And her own, adult children have gotten involved as well. Lorraine’s oldest son, for example, helps out with respite care.

She says after so many years doing foster care, she is likely finished her foster career. But, for many foster parents, it’s so rewarding they cannot quit. “Well, I don’t know. I could take on a teenager if people like Anne twisted my arm.”

Source: <https://cfsocentralmb.mb.ca/stories-about-fostering/>

In our “**FOSTER CORNER**” we would like to highlight anything from foster inspired stories to artwork submitted by foster parents on behalf of children in their homes. If you have a foster story, poem, artwork or some other foster related experience or information to share with our readers, please send it in! All communication or submissions for “Foster Corner” can be sent by email to keanna@sffa.sk.ca





DAMAGE COMPENSATION



When a child in care causes damage to a Foster Parent's property, compensation may be provided by the Ministry when the Foster Family is not eligible for compensation through their personal insurance or the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association (SFFA) insurance rider.

Compensation may be provided for actual loss or to cover the Foster Home's cost of insurance deductibles or increased insurance premiums as a result of making a claim on their personal insurance policy.

It is mandatory that Foster Parents carry sufficient insurance to cover the value of their property such as home insurance or tenant insurance. On home insurance foster children are covered under unnamed insurers. Yet, on many home insurance policies it is mandatory to self disclose that the damages were caused by a foster child.



FOLLOWING STEPS NEEDED TO INITIATE A DAMAGE CLAIM:

1. Inform your Child and Caregiver Support worker and/or Childcare worker when damages occur in the home
2. Call the SFFA to complete an intake form and provide:
 - Dates damages occurred
 - Description of the damages
 - Name(s) and number of foster children in the home
 - Name of your Child and Caregiver Support Worker and the Childcare Worker
 - Copy of your home insurance
 - Pictures of the damages
 - Two quotes for repair and installation costs

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Submitting multiple damages in one claim makes it more difficult to process, such as submitting damages that have accumulated throughout the years. Therefore, when damage happens notify an MSS worker and start an intake form with SFFA as soon as you are able. This is also important as compensation requests must be submitted within two years from the date the damage was incurred or acknowledged. If electronics are damaged do not throw them away, the serial number will be needed, and the item will be recovered.

The benefits of journaling

From travel journals, dream journals, diet journals to gratitude journals, we may keep specific journals for different aspects of our life. A journal or diary is much more than just a book filled with personal thoughts and experiences; it is a powerful tool that can help improve various aspects of one's life. From mental health to personal growth, keeping a journal offers countless benefits.

1. Keep your thoughts organized

Diaries serve as a valuable tool to organize our thoughts and make them more understandable and accessible. With a diary, you can document daily events, express thoughts and feelings about specific experiences, and even share personal opinions.

2. Improve your writing

Journaling helps train your writing skills. If you want to practice or improve your writing, starting a journal is the best thing to do. You don't need to have the perfect topic; all you need to do is start writing your thoughts in journey. The more you write, the more your writing will improve.

3. Helps achieve your goals

A journal serves as a powerful tool for goal setting and tracking progress. By writing down your goals, ambitions, aspirations or even new year resolutions and creating action plans, you increase the likelihood of achieving them. Regularly reviewing your diary can provide valuable insights and reminders, helping you stay focused and motivated on your path to success.

4. Record ideas on-the-go

One of the key benefits of keeping a journal is the ability to record all your ideas in one centralized place, irrespective of time and location. Whenever an idea strikes your mind, you can promptly jot it down in your journal, ensuring that it is captured and preserved for future reference. This becomes particularly valuable as you can revisit these ideas at a later time, enabling you to make new connections, draw meaningful conclusions, or even generate fresh ideas based on your previous entries.

5. Reduces stress & anxiety

Writing down your feelings in a journal acts as an emotional

outlet and serves as a stress-relief mechanism, commonly referred to as a "brain-dump." When you put your thoughts on paper, you alleviate the burden on your mind and cultivate a sense of clarity. Journaling can effectively help manage anxiety by organizing and prioritizing thoughts, ultimately leading to a calmer state of mind.





6. Allow yourself to self-reflect

Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it. In today's fast-paced world, our lives can become increasingly hectic as we take on more responsibilities and face mounting expectations from others. This constant busyness can leave us feeling overwhelmed and caught up in the day-to-day hustle.

However, journaling offers a valuable opportunity for us to pause, step back, and reflect on ourselves. By taking the time to self-reflect, we can express gratitude for the present moment or capture the events of our day in our diary.

7. Boost memory & cognitive skills

Writing things down in a journal improves memory retention. The act of physically recording information helps imprint it into your brain, making it easier to recall later on. Additionally, journaling exercises your cognitive skills, such as critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving. These mental exercises can sharpen your mind and improve overall cognitive functioning.

8. Inspire creativity

Journaling taps into your creative side, allowing you to explore new ideas, perspectives, and solutions. Freely expressing your thoughts in a journal helps generate fresh insights and expand your imagination. This creative boost can be especially helpful for writers, artists, and anyone looking to enhance their problem-solving abilities.

9. Preserves memories & experiences

Journaling acts as a remarkable time capsule, meticulously preserving your cherished memories, significant experiences, and genuine emotions. As the days turn into months and years, you have the incredible ability to revisit your past journal entries and immerse yourself in those captured moments.

10. Improves Mental Health

Journaling is widely recognized as a therapeutic practice for managing mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. It provides a safe space to explore and process difficult emotions. Regularly journaling your thoughts and experiences can alleviate symptoms of depression and promote overall emotional well-being.

11. Fosters gratitude & positivity

In a journal, you can cultivate a habit of gratitude by regularly noting down the things you appreciate in your life. This practice helps shift your focus toward the positive aspects of your day and fosters a more optimistic mindset. By acknowledging and expressing gratitude, you invite more positivity into your life.

Starting and writing in a journal or diary offers numerous benefits for personal well-being, mental health, and personal growth. From enhancing self-awareness and reducing stress to fostering creativity and supporting goal achievement. Journaling is a powerful practice for anyone interested in its benefits.

Source: <https://journeycloud/journaling-benefits>

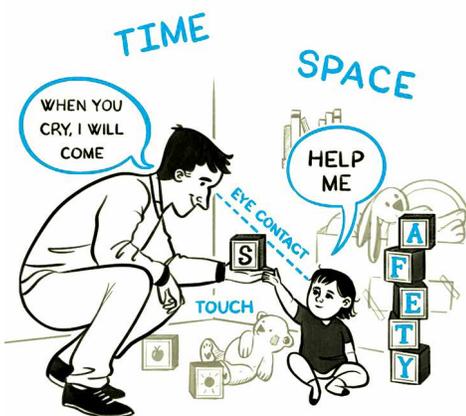


Beginner's Guide to TBRI

What is TBRI?

Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI uses Empowering Principles to address physical and environmental needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs and engagement, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors.

While the intervention is based on years of attachment, sensory processing, and neuroscience research, the heartbeat of TBRI is connection.



Connecting Principles

Our Connecting Principles® consists of two strategies: Mindfulness Strategies and Engagement Strategies. Being mindful has to do with understanding what you bring to the table in every interaction you have with your children. Both in the present moment and based on your history.

Are you hungry? Are you tired? What does your childhood tell you about the behavior that you are currently dealing with? Does that story include a trauma-informed lens? How would that story change if it included the grace necessary for your child to feel safe based on their own history and trauma?

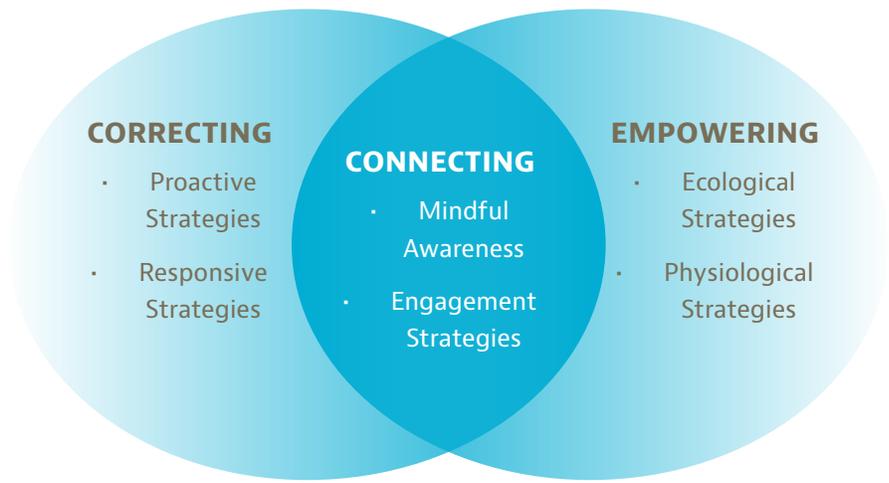
Engagement Strategies are practical tools to connect with people and create healthy attachments. These strategies consist of easy things you can try today to connect with the kids in your life: valuing eye contact, behavior matching, playful engagement, healthy touch, and authoritative voice.

Empowering Principles

Our Empowering Principles® have two sets of strategies as well: our Ecological Strategies and our Physiological Strategies. Ecological strategies have to do with setting up an environment from which our children can be successful and heal. Being mindful around transitions within their day and their life. Scaffolding the amount of support they receive based on their needs, and creating daily rituals that become points of connection and attunement throughout their day.

Our Physiological Strategies are based on helping their brains and bodies excel. In TBRI we believe that kids should be eating protein-rich snacks every two hours, be drinking water consistently, and having a sensory-rich experience at least every two hours. This two-hour routine of snacks, hydration, and sensory activity helps to create stabilization in their brains and bodies in order to limit behavioral meltdowns and emotional outbursts.

What research shows us is that over 85% of children from hard places have some sort of sensory need beyond that of a child who has not experienced early developmental trauma. Therefore, understanding how to interpret behavioral outbursts as possible sensory needs and then meet those needs is key in providing felt safety for our children.



Correcting Principles

Lastly, our Correcting Principles® are broken up into two strategies: the Proactive Strategies, to be taught during calm times before any behavioral problems, and the Responsive Strategies offer tools to use at the moment when a child is having a behavioral outburst. These tools offer research-based methods in calming a child down and teaching skills to eliminate problematic behaviors in the future and rewire the brain.

A key to being proactive with our children is understanding that often times behaviors have to do with a lack of skill comprehension. And discipline must revolve around teaching those skills, not punishing children for the (maladaptive) skills they have learned to get their needs met. An example of this strategy is the re-do. Offering kids, in a playful and engaging way, a chance to try a certain behavior again.

“Get me juice!”
 “Whoa, buddy! Are you asking or telling? Why don’t you try that again please?”

No one is in trouble, the train keeps moving, but we get a

chance to playfully rewire the brain around the correct behavior. Rather than continuing to talk about the wrong way to do things and wire the brain around the wrong way, emphasize and practice the right way!

Where do I start with TBRI?

Remembering the three principles of TBRI is key to bringing balance and perspective when you first begin. We all have a strength, a principle we are already very good at. Begin by recognizing your strength.

For example, you might know all there is to know about providing for your child’s brain and body in promoting health and support. You already have the best snack options, all the right oils, the best Occupational Therapist, and all of the right sensory toys, so you are rocking our “Empowering Principles”.

But the idea of sitting down and connecting with your twelve-year-old, and engaging in what they love to do, makes your skin crawl. You can’t imagine why you might need to learn Fortnite or all about superheroes? Therefore,

understanding more about our Connecting Principles might be where you need to start.



When you connect to the heart of a child, everything is possible.”

– Dr. Karyn Purvis



TBRI is a complex system to help us understand the complex needs of our children. To learn more about TBRI and what it entails you can check out the Karyn Purvis’ Institute of Child Development website and YouTube channel. A good book resource is *The Connected Child* by Drs. Purvis.

Source: <https://creatingafamily.org>



The Evermore Centre

Widening the Circle of Support

Providing pre-and post-adoption support services, as well as support for all forms of permanency including legal guardianship, Person of Sufficient Interest (PSI), and kinship care.



On November 18th, 2023 the community came together at the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre for Strengthening Our Families Feast and Round Dance to honor families grown through kinship, PSI agreements, Adoption, Foster care and all other forms of permanency. It was a wonderful time to learn, celebrate and create new connections.

The partnership of The Evermore Centre, Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Center, Saskatchewan Foster Families, and the White Buffalo Youth Lodge would like to extend a huge thank you to the Saskatoon Community Foundation for a grant that enabled us to bring so many people together, and

the Dakota Dunes for providing financial support towards an Indigenous Cultural Connections Support Program, which provided resources to organize the event. We also appreciated the support and donations that were generously obtained from the Silver Wolf Trading Post.

We would like to recognize and thank all the community members and organizations who came together to make this day possible including:

- Guiding Elder – George Laliberte
- Stickman – Marc Longjohn
- Whipman – Bobby Rainey
- Master of Ceremonies – Elder Sanford Strongarm, Sr.
- All the pipe carriers & oscapyos
- All the drummers and singers
- Feast Head chefs & their assistants
- T-shirt designer - Dyrin
- White Buffalo Youth Lodge Youth Council

As well all the individual volunteers, Elders, and planning committee who spent countless hours behind the scenes making this a wonderful event.



Family Cultural Days

Please join us for a day for the entire family, filled with interesting and fun activities for families grown thru adoption, PSI agreements, guardianship and foster care!

Please check our website www.evermorecentre.ca to register and for updated details regarding these events.

North Battleford

Date: Details to come regarding location, date, and time. Although the date isn't confirmed, we wanted to let families in the North Battleford area that we are bringing this day of learning and connecting for the entire family to them spring 2024.

The morning session will divide the parents/ caregivers into one group and the children into another. The children's group will be led by a child and family therapist who will guide them on feelings and expressing themselves, in an age-appropriate way, while the adults will explore how to parent through understanding issues that manifest in a variety of behaviors.

Lunch will be provided to socialize and connect with other families. After lunch we will start a session on supporting Indigenous culture led by a local Elder and conclude with an indigenous craft – fun for all ages! All families regardless of background are welcome to attend!



Regina

Date: April 2024 – Details to come regarding location, date and time.

The morning session will divide the parents/ caregivers into one group and the children into another. The children's group will be led by a child and family therapist Darlene Slorstad who will guide them on feelings and expressing themselves, in an age-appropriate way, while the adults will explore how to parent through understanding issues that manifest in a variety of behaviors.

Lunch will be provided to socialize and connect with other families. After lunch we will start a session on supporting Indigenous culture led by Elder Howard Thompson and conclude with an indigenous craft – fun for all ages! All families regardless of background are welcome to attend!

Indigenous Storytelling

Date: Thursday February 8th, 6:30 -7:30pm
168 Wall Street, Saskatoon

In honour of Storytelling month, The Evermore Centre is pleased to announce an in-person, collaborative event with the Saskatoon Indian & Métis Friendship Centre! Elder Sanford Strongarm Sr. will guide the storytelling session through various stories and experiences.

This event creates a space for connecting to families built through adoption, foster care, kinship care, and PSI agreements and honors traditional cultural ways of bringing family together.

Enjoy soup and Bannock prepared by SIMFC. All ages are welcome!

Registration is encouraged so that we can ensure enough food is prepared. Please see www.evermorecentre.ca for more information.



SAFE Search Engines for Kids



The internet can be kid-friendly, but there is also inappropriate content that you will want to watch out for. We are living in the age of social media, and it's common for young kids to want to browse YouTube or TikTok, even though they aren't age-appropriate.

The good news for parents is that there are plenty of safe spaces for kids to be on the internet. This will decrease your worry when they are surfing the web or working on homework.

It's no secret that parents are not only worried about what their child might see online, but there are also unsafe people, not to mention ways for kids to spend money without them knowing. There are many dangers but you can implement ways to keep them safe online by using safe search engines, browsers, and extensions that limit what they have access to while they're still too young.

They will inevitably crave more freedom online as they grow, but it is important that you talk to your

kids about what is and isn't okay to search or view on the internet. Keeping them informed can also help with safety.

Be sure to use your best judgment when letting your child surf the web. No search engine is perfect, so be aware of what exactly your child is doing on the internet and make sure it is a fun and safe space as best you can.

Key features of safe kids search engines:

Content Filtering: This is perhaps the most crucial feature of a kid-safe search engine. The engine should automatically filter out inappropriate content, blocking adult-oriented or potentially harmful results from appearing.

Monitored Browsing: Some search engines offer monitored browsing, allowing parents or educators to track the search history. This feature provides an extra layer of security by letting adults know what content the child is accessing.

Kid-Friendly Interface: A safe search engine for children should have a user-friendly interface, often featuring larger icons, simplified navigation, and appealing visuals. It should also provide age-appropriate search results.

Privacy Protection: Safe search engines for children often don't track, store, or share personal data. They don't use cookies or keep a record of searches, thus safeguarding children's online privacy.

Ad Restrictions: Kid-safe search engines usually have strict policies about advertising. Some don't display ads at all, while others ensure that all ads are child-friendly and non-intrusive.

Top 10 kids search engines:

1. **FactMonster** is designed to make learning fun for kids of all ages and is very family-friendly. The home page includes links to all sorts of subjects from math to language arts. There are even fun and safe games and videos as well. It's another great tool for homework help or educational topics and resources.
2. **Kiddle** is a kid-friendly search engine and online encyclopedia. It uses Google Safe Search to filter the content that your child sees. It blocks profanity from search results but isn't foolproof. If you find a questionable website or keyword, you can submit a request to Kiddle to have it blocked or banned.
3. **Kidtopia** is a Google custom search engine that was designed by school librarians. It is designed to be a safe space for kids to research elementary school topics. There are also fun and educational games as well as a YouTube channel with kid-friendly content for them to enjoy.
4. Not only is **Kidzsearch** a safe search engine, but it provides other resources as well. This includes kid-friendly games, images, "KidzTube" which is similar to YouTube, and even KidzSearch Wiki which was made easier for kids to understand when they are researching. There is also an app for Android and Apple devices that provides similar services. It also includes things like "KidzNet" which is a social media network designed specifically for kids.
5. **KidRex** is another free visual search engine that uses Google Safe Search. They have a database of websites and keywords that are deemed inappropriate and therefore have been blocked. Also, it automatically blocks social media websites for peace of mind, in case you do not want your child to have access to sites like Facebook or Tiktok.
6. **DuckDuckGo** is an internet search engine that you can download which includes a web browser and a Google Chrome extension. It was made not only to promote internet safety but also for privacy. If you just use their website, it is a good filter for inappropriate content.
7. **Google Scholar** is not as popular but is a great resource for research and literature. It accesses safe databases from academic professionals including articles and books to provide you with the information you are looking for. It is not a general search engine like the others but is a good choice if you have an older child that is working on a paper or project for school.
8. **Safe Search Kids.** This search engine is made by Google Safe Search. Not only is it a safe browser, but it also has some helpful tools as well. There is information about internet safety and social media for parents to help them better understand the dangers that exist online. Plus, there are safe image and video search pages that filter out inappropriate and adult content.
9. **Secure Teen** is a popular Google Chrome extension that was designed to block adult websites and also has a profanity filter. If you want to keep them away from YouTube and TikTok, there are options to filter out social networks and specific content. Plus, it also has parental controls and can be password protected. It has a free trial, but after that, it does cost money to keep.
10. **KidInfo** is one of the best search tools for homework help. There are resources for elementary students, fun games and activities for young children, and parenting tips and resources. It isn't technically a search engine, but it contains links to safe and age-appropriate content for kids.

Source: <https://www.familyeducation.com>

DIY ART JOURNALS

FOR KIDS



These DIY art journals for kids can be made with recycled and upcycled materials you have around the house. Include drawing prompts such as magazine images or altered pages to inspire your kids' creativity! Drawing prompts and challenges encourage kids to think and create differently. Instead of being faced with a daunting blank piece of paper on which to draw, they could be presented with a hole in the paper and decide how to incorporate a hole into the artwork or whether to draw around the perimeter of the hole, etc. Or introduce a prompt using a small portion of a magazine picture pasted to the paper, and let them decide how to complete the picture or incorporate the magazine image into a drawing or painting.

This is something parents could do with the kids, for the kids, or even for themselves. Here's how...



MATERIALS

- Thin cardboard (from cereal boxes, cracker boxes, etc)
- Recycle bin paper (grocery bags, magazines, notecards, lined paper)
- A variety of papers including colored construction paper, patterned paper (think scrapbooking or origami paper), and white drawing paper
- Artwork (either art that you make specifically for these art journals or artwork that might have been headed for the recycle bin)
- Sewing machine OR needle & thread
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Utility knife
- Self-healing mat OR thick piece of cardboard
- Glue stick

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1. Make the Journal Cover

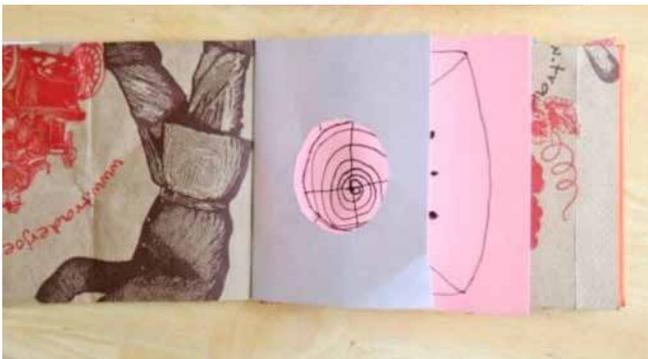
Fold your thin cereal box cardboard and cut it into the size you want your art journal to be. You can make your art journal as big as a box of cereal or as small as a notepad. Turn the cardboard over if you want the plain brown side to be on the outside.

Step 2. Cut your Pages to Size

Cut and fold a variety of papers to fit inside the cardboard journal cover. They don't have to fit exactly. If some pages are shorter than others, it adds to the interest. (Don't worry about pages being too big right now, they will get trimmed down later.)

Step 3. Arrange the Journal Pages

Nest the pages in any order desired. I liked to provide variety, putting brown paper bag pages next to white drawing paper next to colored construction paper, etc.



Step 4. Sew the Art Journal

Sew through the pages and the cardboard cover with a straight basting stitch on the sewing machine, or hand sew with needle and thread. Or you can punch holes and sew with embroidery floss or yarn.

Step 5. Trim the Edges

Trim the edges of your art journal. Set the journal down on your self-healing mat (or thick cardboard), line up a ruler with one edge of the book cover, and use the utility knife to slice through any paper overhanging the cover. Repeat with the other edges.

Note: Using the utility knife is a job for an adult. You could also use scissors and trim a few pages at a time if you prefer.



Step 6. Add Drawing Prompts

You can use your new art journal as is—maybe decorate the cover first with a small artwork or stamp the words ART JOURNAL—or you can alter the pages with drawing prompts and challenges, such as...

- Cut a hole out of a page
- Paste an interesting paper or shape onto a page
- Add googly eye stickers to a page
- Glue a portion of a magazine picture to a page
- Make a flap
- Draw frames on a page
- Draw a squiggle or other drawing prompt
- Add photocopied nature items
- Other? Use your imagination!

Step 7. Let dry

Press your new DIY art journal under some heavy books as it dries. If there's the possibility of glue sticking pages together, you can let it dry first before pressing it or place wax paper between the pages as it dries.

Step 8. Use the Art Journals for Kids

Use your new art journal! You can draw in it with any drawing tools (pen, pencil, marker, crayon), collage in it, or even paint in it.

DIY art journals are a great tool for children to explore creativity, engage thinking skills, or even to communicate thoughts and feelings.

They also make great gifts... Have fun!

Source: <https://artfulparent.com>



goodreads



The Connected Parent

Real-Life Strategies for Building Trust and Attachment

by Dr. Karyn Purvis and Lisa Qualls

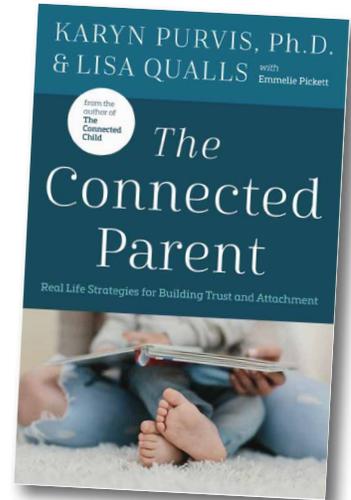
Parenting under the best of circumstances can be difficult. And raising children who have come to your home from “hard places,” who have their own set of unique needs, brings even more challenges. You may have discovered that the techniques that worked with one child are not working with another, especially a child who has joined your family after experiencing early childhood trauma.

Renowned child-development expert Dr. Karyn Purvis gives you practical advice and powerful tools you can use to encourage secure attachment in your family. You will benefit from Karyn’s decades of clinical research and real-world experience. Coauthor Lisa Qualls demonstrates how you can successfully implement these strategies in your home, just as she did in hers.

You will learn how to effectively use simple scripts, nurture your child, combat chronic fear, teach respect, and develop other valuable tools to facilitate a healing connection with your child.

There is hope for every child, every parent, and every family. *The Connected Parent* will help you to lovingly guide your children and bring renewed hope and restoration to your family.

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