



Mount Pleasant Family Centre

SUMMER 2011

The *Mount Pleasant Family Centre* in Robson Park is a unique resource centre for families with young children (ages 0-5) to drop in, make new friends, learn new skills and receive support in times of need.

We offer a friendly, informal *home away from home*, which brings out the best in children and their caregivers. We provide high-quality support programs for kids (like *ABC Time*) and parents (like *Nobody's Perfect* and *Baby & Me*) in a multicultural setting. We are unique because your children can play in a safe environment with highly experienced staff while you take a break for coffee and chat with friends.

2910 St. George Street, Vancouver, BC V5T 4L9 • 604 872 6757 • www.mpfamilycentre.ca

President's Message by Caroline Provost

Summer is here! Even though it seems that we skipped spring altogether, I'm very optimistic that the coming months will be warm and sunny so that we can enjoy all the lovely parks and pools, beaches and events that Vancouver has to offer.

I hope you all enjoyed our annual Canada Day Party on June 30th. It was definitely a pleasure to see so many of you celebrate together with us; the parade was very impressive, our anthem loud and clear and red and white crowns and crowds (under the sunny skies!) were truly everywhere. I would like to extend a very warm thank you to all of you for joining and supporting us. Big thanks as well to all our sponsors, to everyone who donated cakes for the cake walk and to all the volunteers who signed up to make this party a success. And of course a special thanks goes to the entire staff and my fellow members of the Party Committee for making it all happen.

Another big event that definitely marked the start of summer was the graduation party on June 16th. More than 60 children that visited

the Centre regularly will be going to Kindergarten in September this year. With two of them being my own twins, I can honestly say that I enjoyed this thoughtful event organized by the staff. I would like to join them in wishing all our 'big kids' the very best for next year!

The Centre stays open all summer; we'll even have special workshops in August and a fun-in-the-park day on August 18th. With the wading pool opened, why not come say hello at the drop-in before or after a refreshing splash? And it might seem a very long shot, but mark your calendars already for Tuesday September 20th, where you're all invited to our Annual General Meeting. Leaves me nothing else to do then wishing you all a wonderful summer, safe travels if that's on your horizon and I hope you will enjoy this summer edition of our newsletter.

Sincerely, Caroline

Photo: Graduation Day at the Centre



Mount Pleasant Family Bike Ride



On Saturday June 11th, about 25 parents and children armed with bikes, trailers, bike seats and helmets met in Robson Park before heading towards Trout Lake on the first Mount Pleasant Family Bike Ride. The idea to gather families from the community for a family bike ride came from Heather Berry, a young mom who's been coming to the Centre since her son Sam (now 13 months) was 3 months old. An avid biker herself and inspired by the Velopalooza campaign, Heather and her friend and fellow new mom Jennica started planning for the event. The weather co-operated very well, it was even sunny during the picnic in Trout Lake Park. There were some nice prizes for grabs and most of all it was fun to meet other active families from the 'hood'. Biking in group is a great way to show children how fun biking can be (think of how much distraction the toddler in the bike seat beside you might offer) and it also offers the added benefit of safety for the not-so-experienced-yet young bikers on the road.

To give the event a nice touch of added purpose, Heather decided to ask participants for a small, voluntary donation that would

be going towards the Family Centre. She said that after her good experience – and that of many of her friends - it just made sense to donate the money to the Centre to ensure that they can continue the good work they do reaching out to families.

A date for another family ride has not been set yet, but Heather mentioned that people were interested in doing this again. We suggest you keep your ears and eyes open for more info later. Thank you Heather and Jennica and everyone who participated for the great initiative and your generosity towards the Family Centre.



Board Member Profile Karen Di Venanzo

Hi my name is Karen Di Venanzo. I've been one of the Board Members here at the Family Centre for the last 3 years and I also took on the role of Treasurer 2 years ago. My son Nathan was only 14 months old when I first discovered the Family Centre but I soon realized how important the Centre was to me and family. I somehow wanted to give back and decided to volunteer my time by taking on a position as Board Member. When the position of Treasurer was offered to me a year later, I accepted it with open arms. During my role as Treasurer I have worked closely with the financial administrator of the Centre who has also been a very supportive and fantastic mentor. I've been involved in budgeting, grant applications, financial reports etc and through this position as Treasurer I've gained lots of experience that I can use in my personal and business life. I can't thank the Family Centre enough for providing this for me and that's why, with mixed emotions, I have decided to step down from the Board at the upcoming AGM. My son is now heading into Grade 1 and I will be focusing more time with his school. If you would be interested in finding out more about the Treasurer position or any other position on our Board of Directors, please feel free to speak to our staff or any of our Board Members.



Tracy, Karen and son Nathan

Stream of Dreams

This coming Fall students at Florence Nightingale Elementary and Mount Pleasant Elementary School will be embarking on a project with the Stream of Dreams Mural Society's Watershed Education through Community Art program. Students will learn all about our local water sources and what we can do to help protect the fish and our streams, rivers, lakes and ocean. Mount Pleasant Elementary received funding from Vancouver 125, so in conjunction with community art and watershed awareness, they will also commemorate Vancouver's 125th Birthday while acknowledging the over 50 salmon bearing streams Vancouver is built on.

As they develop their connection to water and fish habitats, each student will get to paint his or her own wooden fish which will then be fastened to the fence around the schools, transforming the ugly chain link fences into an urban stream.

Please contact the school PAC if you are interested in supporting this project through a donation (cost is \$10 per child) or by volunteering your time. Check the society's website at streamofdreams.org for tips on how you can help protect our water and fish.

We can't wait to see the students' artwork and hear what they have learned about our local fish habitats. Watch for the fish which we hope to see this coming Fall.



O Canada!



We were very very happy,
On the thirtieth of June,
We will chat for just a minute,
You will understand it soon.
For we had a great big party,
We paraded up and down,
We had hot dogs, fruit and drinks,
And we played and danced around.
We had games of chance and games of skill,
Festive wear, so red and white,
Balloons and cakes so pretty,
It was, my friend, a real delight.
We said, "We Love you, Canada!"
We celebrated loud and long!
Our country large and lovely,
Is most worthy of that famous song.
We have so many thanks to give,
We want to really cheer,
Those folks who kindly helped us,
We hold them very dear.

So friends please read the following list,
Give thanks and think of taking your biz there,
Here's to our sponsors bakers and volunteers,
We're really glad you care. With our heartfelt thanks to:

Marketplace IGA (Main Street), Choices Markets (Cambie Street), Famous Foods, PriceSmart Foods, Real Canadian Superstore, Kam's Bakery, Rhizome Cafe, Freshslice Pizza (Main Street), Nesters Market (Main Street), Old Dutch, G&F Financial, Kiddo and Heritage Canada.

Save the Date

Grab your red pen and calendars and circle Friday November 4 - it's MPFC's 35th birthday celebration. We are planning a family friendly party at Capri Hall on Fraser Street and we hope that you and your loved ones can come to make the event a success and to give your Family Centre the party it deserves.

We will honour the Centre's humble beginnings, celebrate its strength and ongoing service to local families, and toast the future of the Centre. We will also catch up with friends, old and new, and enjoy a dinner out. Bring your appetite and any extra cash you have for our silent auction.

Stay tuned to our newsletter and our website for further details regarding tickets, timing and menu. In the meantime, we'd love your help to organize and carry out this event - whether you have a lot of time or just a little. And don't worry - we'll have a hazy lazy summer and then roll up our party planning sleeves once school is back in. If we can count on your help, please contact the Centre.



AGM Invite

The Board and Staff of the Mount Pleasant Family Centre would like to invite you all to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Tuesday September 20th 2011, from 9:30am to 11:30am. Childcare at the drop-in will be provided during the meeting and we'll have light snacks and a special family time afterwards.

We hope you can join us!

Membership Drive Update

Thanks to everyone for helping us create awareness about the importance of our membership drive for the Family Centre. As a non-profit organization we heavily rely on donations and membership fees to be able to continue to offer all the great services. Thank you to all our new and renewing members for taking part.

If by chance you missed the membership drive and are wanting more information please talk to one our excellent staff. Thank you once again!



When Students Return...

Is it not amazing to run into someone you haven't seen for years and to be able to catch up? That's exactly how our staff felt when Cindy Coa walked in to the Family Centre again. Cindy worked at the Centre as a student in the summers of '97 and '98 and now returned to the drop-in with her own two little girls, the oldest age 2 and the youngest only 4 months. After working with the centre, Cindy became a dentist and recently opened a new clinic in the neighbourhood. When asked for memories of her summers with us, she said that if she had to use one word to summarize... it would be BUSY. Back then, the Centre had not undergone its major renovations and upgrades yet which meant that the playroom was a lot smaller (the area with the train table and baby corner is new). There were days when more than 60 kids attended one session and -unlike this summer- some days were really hot too. But most of all, she remembers having lots of fun with the kids and parents alike. For Cindy, the success of the Family Centre lies with the great staff it has. She's known the team for a long time and they are super wonderful with children and adults. They are warm and caring individuals and most of all they are good listeners and they love what they do.

"I wish there were more places like the Family Centre throughout the Lower Mainland because I think it's a great place for families to drop in and get support from each other."

Thank you Cindy, for answering our questions! It's a pleasure to see you again and to meet your family.

Kiddo Consignment

We are teaming up with Kiddo Consignment again, this time for a Fall run. Similar to our Spring/Summer clothing drive (which raised \$225 so far!!), Kiddo will sell the donated clothes and give the Family Centre 60%, versus the usual 40% of the sales. If you plan on doing some de-cluttering in preparation for back-to-school and would like to contribute to this initiative, please bring up to 20 pieces of Fall clothes to the Family Centre by August 15th. Please note that Kiddo will accept all children's clothing, hats and shoes as well as maternity clothes as long as they are in season (bathing suits accepted all year round), clean and in very good condition. No Disney or other popular cartoon characters please.

Thank you for your contributions to the Family Centre and thank you Kiddo, for your generous community support.

Looking for a Graphic Designer

We're looking for a graphic designer to help us with the lay-out of our newsletters. Anne Saint-Louis, our former board member who's responsible for the fun design of the current newsletters is moving on to new challenges, so if you have working knowledge of Adobe InDesign, a few hours to spare every 3 to 4 months and an interest in volunteering with us and, please let us know by email: mountpleasantfamilycentre@gmail.com.

We look forward to working with you!

Meet our Summer Students

Summer has come again and you may have noticed a couple of new faces at the Centre. We're very happy to have two new summer students this year helping us until the end of August. They're both UBC students and are great young ladies who will –no doubt–be wonderful to have around.

Ashleigh will enter the fourth year of her Life Sciences degree this fall. She's aiming towards a career in Pediatric Nursing. She has worked with children since high school, most notably in Therapeutic Horseback Riding for developmentally disabled children. Now that sounds like fun!



Summer students: Ashleigh and Katie

Katie just finished her second year studying Human Kinetics at UBC. Spending time at our Family Centre is an opportunity for her to make new friendships and to learn to communicate better with children. Her goal is to go to Australia after her studies and work in Occupational Therapy.

Please take a minute at your next visit to say 'hi' and help them to feel welcome; they look forward to meeting all of you.

This Summer 2011 Newsletter
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Please Help Us Manage Our Space



Regular Family Centre families know how busy our stroller area can get! As a way of managing the space better, starting July 4th we're asking that all strollers - other than those with a sleeping baby of course - be left outside, at the back of the building. Our plan over the next few weeks is to convert the entrance area into a more comfortable cloakroom space for everyone.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and understanding.



Mount Pleasant Family Centre

www.mpfamilycentre.ca 604 872 6757

Calendar of Events SUMMER 2011

JULY

13 Wednesday AM
Science World
details @ Centre

14 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

28 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

Drop-in Times

Mount Pleasant Family Centre
Monday to Thursday 9:30 am 11:30 am
and 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Kimount and StrongStart
Both closed for the summer,
re-opening in September.

AUGUST

01 Monday
Centre closed
(BC Day)

11 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

18 Thursday 10am to 2pm
Party in the Park
Robson Park

25 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

**Friday Mornings
in August** Parent Workshop Series
(details to follow)

SEPTEMBER

05 Monday
Centre closed
(Labour Day)

08 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

12 Monday
Kimount re-opens

16 Friday AM
Start of Nobody's
Perfect Series

20 Tuesday AM
AGM
Drop-in open

22 Thursday AM
Toy Lending Library

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