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# Cameray Newsletter

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## Take the Parenting Quiz

I looked for one word to describe the parenting job. I settled on “intricate” when I read Webster’s definition: *something hard to understand because it’s full of puzzling parts and details*. I can think of no other job that compares with the demands of parenting.

As intricate and complicated as the parenting job is, not enough people spend time creating a “parenting plan”. A “parenting plan” is figuring out in advance how you will handle misbehavior and discipline issues. A good plan also lays out how you will instill the values that are important to you in your children.

The first step to this process is identifying your strengths and weaknesses in the current way you parent. I’ve developed a fun quiz that will help you do just that. Find a quiet corner and take this quiz. Be honest and thoughtful. The answers may surprise you, but reviewing them can help you analyze and improve your parenting style, and get you on the road to creating a successful “parenting plan.”

Are each of these statements Usually True or Usually False?

Our house is a gathering place for the neighborhood kids.

My children have daily chores.

Throughout the day, I give my child choices, instead of always

giving orders.

My children are in bed at the same time almost every night.

My kids use “Please” and “Thank you” when they talk to me.

I use “Please” and “Thank you” when I talk to my kids.

My instructions tend to be brief and specific (I don’t lecture.)

I don’t give in to a child’s nagging, whining and pleading.

We have specific family rules and everybody in the family knows them.

When I say it I mean it. My kids know this and they do as I ask.

My kids clean up their own messes.

Our family eats dinner together.

I trust my children.

I am consistent in the things that I say “no” or “yes” to.

When a problem occurs, we address it, solve the problem, and then it’s over.

I compliment my children at least twice as often as I criticize them.

I’m involved in PTA or other school activities.

The first things I say to my children in the morning are pleasant and loving.

The last words I say to my children at night are pleasant and loving.

I learn about parenting by reading books and articles or by taking classes.

These statements reflect parenting skills that together create a strong parenting plan. The best answer to each of these questions is “Usually True”. Take some time to ponder any statement to which you have answered “Usually False”. Ask yourself why the preferred answer is True. Determine what changes you can make in your family to better reflect the concepts presented in each statement.

Sometimes the decisions we make when parenting our children are not really decisions at all – but more like knee-jerk reactions. It takes time and effort to create and follow a good parenting plan. It’s well worth the effort, since a good plan will make your daily decisions easier and help you be more consistent with your kids. The end result is: calmer parents and well-behaved children.

*Elizabeth Pantley, author of Parent Tips, Perfect Parenting and Kid Cooperation.*

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## The End of the Road for Ritalin?



*Computer exercises help hyperactive children increase their attention span.*

For parents of the more than 300,000 Canadian children suffering from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), research is providing new hope that their kids can be helped without the use of powerful prescription drugs.

For years the stimulant, Ritalin, was the only choice in treating ADHD, but with funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Universite du Quebec a Montreal professor Andre Achim is testing new drug-free treatments to calm and focus hyperactive kids.

According to Achim, the most promising methods use computer exercises for "intensive attention span training." The "concentration gym," for example, displays a set of random lines on a computer screen, which the child then has to

memorize and reproduce. Children participate in two to three 15-minute sessions a week, and the tasks get increasingly more difficult as they progress.

"We hope not only to increase the children's attention span, but also to get them to better control their own behaviour," says Achim.

The computer-based programs also offer advantages, such as easy-to-understand results, and easy access for parents who could eventually download treatment software over the internet.

Even more promising, the methods being tested exploit the brain's capacity to reorganize itself according to the different tasks it performs. For example, the more a violinist practices, the more the part of the brain controlling his or her fingers

expands. Achim and his team hope to achieve the same results with the part of the brain that controls concentration.

"We realize now that the brain is much more adaptable than we thought," says Achim. "We have discovered that, with the right training, children can learn to control themselves."

So, is this the end of the road for Ritalin?

"Not yet," says Achim, "because the drug really does reduce certain disruptive behaviours and increase children's receptiveness to training methods."

However, the fact the tiny pill will no longer be the only way of treating ADHD is great news for parents and children alike.

*News Canada*

## Helping Children Feel Good About Themselves



*Showing children that they are loved and accepted simply because they exist is the first and most important step to building a healthy self-esteem.*

Self-esteem is the value we place on ourselves. It is the feeling we have about all the things we see ourselves to be. It is the knowledge that we are lovable, we are capable, and we are unique.

As a parent, you have the greatest influence in shaping your children's sense of self-worth; you are their first and most important teacher. Their self-esteem is further influenced as they develop relationships with other family members, school teachers, friends, and other adults.

Children who feel good about themselves will have fewer behavior problems and a better outlook on life and on their own ability to succeed in it.

Here are a few helpful hints for parents to keep in mind to help their children develop a good self-esteem:

- Congratulate children when they have done something right;
- Encourage children to take an interest in outside activities (e.g. music, sports..) and show interest in the new things that they have learned;
- Show children that you trust them by giving them responsibilities and showing them that you are proud of them when they complete a task well;
- When children do something wrong show them that you are disappointed by what they did, not by who they are;
- Encourage children to persevere by showing them that you understand their frustrations but that you have confidence in their abilities to succeed;
- Listen to children when they talk;
- Show children that you care about them; and
- Treat children the way that you would like to be treated by being polite, respectful and kind towards them.

*Canadian Association for Community Care, September 1996, Child & Family Canada Website*

*Canadian Mental Health Association, July 2001, Child & Family Canada Website*

## Parenting Corner

Partners in

### **NOBODY'S PERFECT**

The Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program is a free program for parents of children 0 to 5 years of age covering various topics including: child health and safety, child development, understanding behaviour, and strategies for coping with stress. This 6 session program provides a safe and supportive way for parents to share ideas, concerns and experiences with other parents. It is built around five colorful, easy-to-read books which are given to the parents free of charge. During the sessions, trained facilitators

support participants as they work together to discover ways of parenting.

*"Nobody's Perfect accepted me as who I am and helped me learn who I can be."* (Parent)

The program is based on the principles of adult education—it builds on what parents already know and do for themselves and their children. It starts with the parents' personal experiences and interests and actively involves participants in the learning process. It builds networks among parents and encourages them to see one another as sources of advice and support.

*"I would recommend it to friends—it's a way to make new friends and find mutual support."* (Parent)

Nobody's Perfect was developed by Health Canada in partnership with the Departments of Health of the four Atlantic Provinces and introduced nationally in 1987.

Cameray Centre recently received funding through the Ministry of Children and Families to facilitate Nobody's Perfect through our Partners in Parenting Program. We are pleased to be able to offer this program to our local community.



## Cameray Connects with Kids Up Front

Having seats sit empty at any event, whether it's a hockey game, concert or live theatre production, doesn't make sense when there are so many who can benefit from the experience.

Cameray Centre has partnered with the Kids Up Front Foundation in order to get free event tickets for our young people. The turnaround process on these events is very fast (1-2 days) and we may have little warn-

ing before events. In exchange, the events are always free and a great opportunity for kids to have some fun.

Across Canada, Kids Up Front provides entertainment and educational opportunities for kids and their families who may not otherwise have the experiences. Working closely with nearly 300 registered child-serving agencies, numerous corporations, entertainment venues and the public, they redistribute unused tickets and

create special events that help families heal, bond, and unite.

If you are currently attending counselling at Cameray, current ticket information is posted in the reception areas of both the Burnaby and New Westminster offices. If you are interested in a particular event, you may contact our head office directly to obtain the tickets. They are on a first come, first serve basis. We encourage our clients to take full advantage of this free service.

*Kids Up Front is holding a special fundraising event, "A Historic Night", at Storyeum in Gastown on Thursday, June 16th. For more information please call: 604-266-KIDS.*

## Recipe Corner

### **APPLE & PEAR CRUMBLE**

1 1/2 pounds cooking apples, peeled, cored, and chopped

1 tsp ground mixed spice

1/2 cup white sugar

1 x 400g can pears in natural juice, drained and chopped

1 cup sultanas

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 cup margarine

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup flaked almonds

1 cup porridge oats

Place the apples, mixed spice and sugar in a large saucepan. Cover and cook over a low heat for 15 minutes until softened. Remove from heat, stir through the pears and sultanas then

pour into a 1.4 liter pie dish. To make the crumble, sift the flour into a large bowl and rub in the margarine. Stir in the sugar, almonds and the oats. Spoon the crumble mixture on top of the fruit and press down lightly. Bake at 190°C/375°F for about 30 to 35 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with ice-cream or low fat yogurt.





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### MISSION STATEMENT:

*Cameray Centre is a community-based agency committed to the strengthening of individuals and families through support, counselling, education, outreach, and advocacy. We are a non-profit agency serving Burnaby and New Westminster residents since 1972.*

### FUNDED BY:

*Ministry of Child & Family Development  
The Fraser Health Authority  
Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General*

### WITH DONATIONS FROM:

*BC Gas Warm Hearts Fund;  
CKNW Orphans Fund;  
J. B. Orr;  
Stan Milacek;  
Calkins & Burke*

## Fundraising at Cameray

Fundraising at Cameray Centre is in progress, with a focus on providing program funding for children, youth and families. Proposed partnerships with corporations and foundations provide opportunities for agencies to come together to help the community. Increasing the online accessibility of Cameray Centre, the organization is now featured on the Give Meaning web site, giving individuals a chance to learn more about Cameray and its services. Together with community partners and donors, Cameray Centre will continue to help the community.

Creating proposals for funding is an individual process. For each potential donor, like a corporation or foundation, there is a specific proposal created, highlighting a program or initia-

tive. Due to this process, many of Cameray Centre's programs have had an opportunity to be highlighted, and if chosen, will receive funding to support the activities of that program.

For individuals who wish to give to Cameray Centre there are several options. Online there are: CanadaHelps.org, accessible through the Cameray Centre website, or GiveMeaning.com, where gift cards can be purchased to donate to charities. Donations can also be accepted through the United Way, or you can send donations directly to Cameray Centre. However you choose to give, every little bit helps!

## Funder Highlight—CKNW

CKNW has been kindly donating to Cameray Community Fund since 1997. Through this yearly donation, we are able to purchase a variety of items for the children who access our centre. Toys, therapeutic books and videos, and art supplies, as well as supplies for our Partners in Parenting Program such as baby formula, food, and diapers, are some of the goods purchased through this donation. We thank CKNW for their generosity.

## Announcements

In this year's *Annual Report of Community Groups and Funders*, 98% of community groups rated their satisfaction with Cameray as good or excellent. As an incentive for these groups to fill out their evaluations and return them, their names were placed in a draw for a \$50 gift certificate at Office Depot. We are pleased to announce the winner of the certificate is Stride School. Thank-you to everyone who participated!