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**Deadline:** Article submission deadline for next newsletter is July 31, 2009

**Theme for Next Issue:**  
**Changing Seasons—  
New Beginnings**

**\*Please share your ideas on Fall, school, and being a caregiver**

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## It's Summer . . . Now What Do We Do???

By Brenda Hancharuk

*Before we know it school will be out for another year and free time will be plentiful. Children will gleefully venture upon the hopes of an exciting summer. The initial elation can grow old very quickly when kids realize there's NOTHING TO DO! It can be challenging to keep the kids occupied over the summer but with a little bit of planning and some great ideas, you can beat those summer blahs (for the most part)*

### Indoor Activities

**Papier-mâché stuff.** Mix water and flour in a bowl to create a paste. Cut up strips of newspapers and make papier-mâché objects. You can make piñatas, decorative items or animal creations. Just remember it takes several days for it to dry before you can paint and decorate it.

**5-Minute Make-Your-Own- Ice Cream.** In a quart Ziploc bag, put in a cup of milk, a teaspoon of vanilla. In a gallon Ziploc bag, put in 1/3 of a cup of salt and fill the bag ¾ of the way full with ice cubes. Place the smaller bag inside the larger bag, and shake for 5 minutes. Open and serve!

**Start making holiday gifts for family.** Use all the free time you have in the summer to start on your holiday gift list. The kids can make photo frames, mini scrap-books, and craft items to give as gifts throughout the year.

**Tye Dye.** You can buy a kit or just get the colors from the craft store (or department store). You'll need socks or tee shirts or whatever else you want to tye dye, rubber bands, and rubber gloves to protect your skin from the dye.

### Outdoor Activities

**Bubble art.** When the kids tired of making bubbles, add a few drops of food coloring to the bubble solution and have them blow bubbles that pop onto white paper. The result will be an artistic masterpiece made from the rainbow colored bubbles!

**Sand art.** Use food coloring to color sand in Ziploc bags. Pour the sand on paper plates to dry before using. Once dry, glue to paper to make cards and art; or fill plastic containers with your sand art creations.

**Scavenger Hunt.** Create a list of 20 or more things that can be found naturally outside in your area, things like pinecones, specific flowers, nuts, etc. Send the kids on a scavenger hunt to try and collect one of each item on the list.

**Make a slip n'slide.** Use an old tarp as a slip n' slide, or buy one. The kids will enjoy this activity for a few hours on a hot summer day.



## Building Futures Together

By Jim Toner



*M.L.A. Genia Leskiw brought greetings on behalf of the Minister*

The theme of the annual Caregiver's Training Retreat was "Building Futures Together," and this theme truly reflected this group's desire to take on the future as one. The event was held in Bonnyville on March 6-8 and was attended by approximately 130 participants from across the North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) region.

Originally designed as a foster care training retreat, the event has been transformed and expanded to include caregivers in adoption, kinship care, and daycare, as well as staff from the CFSA. The conference brought together a group of people who have a passion for providing stable, loving environments for children, where they can learn, laugh, and develop friendships and supports.

The courses and presentations were very well received and the knowledge obtained will benefit children and families. The group was inspired by a presentation from Myles Himmelreich, a young man with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) who has learned to live with his challenges and has been able to develop incredible strengths. Himmelreich described his life experiences by relating them to the children this group knows and loves. The presentation brought a very

human face to the challenges that come with FASD, but also provided exceptional hope.

Group discussions focusing on challenges and successes in the foster care system pinpointed staff vacancies and turnover as the biggest challenge. The key successes were teamwork, respect, and training.

At the conference, Regional Advisory Committee announced the Mentorship Program that is being developed. The program will provide additional support to new families. Dr. David Rideout, CEO, indicated the Region has a strong commitment to maintaining regional training opportunities for the foster, adoptive, and kinship care families.

Every year an individual or group who has done outstanding partnership work to improve the lives of children is honored. This year the Regional Foster Care Society and North Central Alberta CFSA recog-

nized the City of Cold Lake, the Town of Bonnyville, the Municipal District of Bonnyville, the Town of St. Paul, and the County of St. Paul for their support and commitment to foster and adoptive parents in their communities. Mayor Craig Copeland of Cold Lake and Reeve Ed Rondeau of the M.D. of Bonnyville were in attendance and were presented with recognition awards by Emile Pelletier, President of the Regional Foster Care Society and Dr. David Rideout, CEO of North Central Alberta CFSA.

Plans for next year's event are already in motion and the group is hoping to build on their successes.

Lyle Gardner and Susan Lander were the winners of the draw from the completed evaluations. Thanks to everyone for their feedback!



*Pictured above: Emile Pelletier (left) and Dr. David Rideout (right) present Mayor Craig Copeland of Cold Lake (center left) and Reeve Ed Rondeau of the M.D. of Bonnyville (center right) with recognition awards*

## Adoption Profile



## JERIMIAH

Jerimiah, born in 2002, is a handsome little boy with short brown hair, beautiful blue eyes, and a wide smile that is often on display! When in a particularly happy frame of mind, and having developed appropriate familiarity, Jerimiah is ready with his affection, enjoying an exuberant hug and holding hands. He can display lovely manners, and he enjoys interacting with adults and peers alike. A physically active little boy, Jerimiah loves to swim and play outdoors. Other enjoyed activities include make-believe play, crafting, reading, and indulging his interest in dinosaurs.

Jerimiah is an outgoing and friendly boy, who likes to set his own agenda. A capable student academically, the challenge for Jerimiah is remaining on task. Additional classroom support is thus provided to ensure the greatest degree of social, academic, and behavioral success. Jerimiah enjoys school and his teachers, and has made good gains through committed effort and encouragement. He is currently performing at a satisfactory level in all subjects and he excels in reading. His ability to recognize and pronounce even the longest of dinosaur names is quite remarkable!

Jerimiah will benefit from the stability and continuity an energetic, patient, predictable, and loving two parent family can provide. A home where this young boy can remain the youngest child in the home would be most suitable. Jerimiah's adoptive family will ensure his best interests are being met in being able and willing to assist in facilitating an ongoing connection with his brother.

Prepared February 2009

**If you would like more information about Jerimiah, please contact your worker**

## Planning for Success

Adapted from a speech by Dr. David Rideout

Most of us would be totally at a loss if we were asked to back a semi truck up to a loading dock in the city. It would be even worse if the truck was twice as long as most, and the loading dock was in a narrow alley. Every day as caregivers we face challenges. However, if we approach our challenges in the same way the driver of a semi truck approaches backing up to a loading dock, we can be successful. These are the keys:

1. Clear Purpose
2. A plan (assess the situation)
3. Training
4. Skills
5. Experience
6. A Right Attitude
7. Perseverance—try and try again, making adaptations



# Camping Invitation



*Edson Caregiver's Association  
is sponsoring a Family Camp Out for Foster, Adoptive  
and Kinship Families and Region 7 CFSA staff*

Anderson Ranch (40 km West of Edson)  
June 19/20/21

Free Hot Dogs Friday  
Free Pancake Breakfast Sunday morning

Bon Fire Sing Along

Register by June 5, 2009

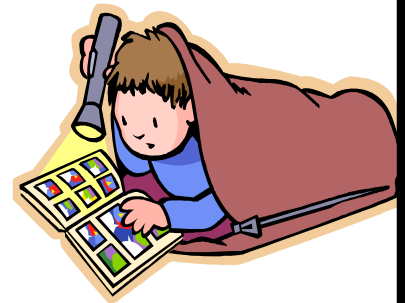
## Fun for the Family

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR  
TO REGISTER, CONTACT:

Gean Chouinard  
780-723-7907  
geanchouinard@yahoo.ca

OR

Jodie Grassing  
780-712-3040  
Peterbilt3575@msn.com



# ***FAMILY CAMP OUT***

## Who's My Worker?

Chantal Tkach, Adoption/Permanency Planning Worker

**From where do you hail?**

**Born and Raised in Nipawin, Saskatchewan....Go Roughriders!**

**When choosing a career, what other choices did you consider?**

**My high school yearbook says I was going to be a Social Worker.....but my other life choice was to be a Mom....I love that too.**

**What has been the greatest lesson you have learned through your work?**

**Rushing, hurrying, ....doesn't always yield great result....be patient, follow a path, consistent, and committed to the children, and things will work out in the end.**

**Do you have a success story that makes you feel the real value of social work; one that you feel shows the hard work you do is making a difference?**

**Every child who we are able to place in a forever family is a success.**

**What is your best daily habit?**

**Maybe not everyday....but I'm a runner....I try to run ½ hour three times per week.**

**Your worst?**

**When there is more work, both at home, and at work, than one person can accomplish the balance is off. I tend to focus on either home or work completely until the other falls apart, and then I switch to focusing on the one that is falling apart....and this just goes on and on.**

**What new things have you been wanting to learn/discover/try?**

**I want to travel the world.**

**If you could live someone else's life for a day whom would you choose?**

**The Tao – that would be a peaceful day.**

**What is your motto?**

**Everything is unfolding just as it is meant to.**

**If you could make one change in the system, what change would you make?**

**It's always the same answer for me. Smaller caseloads, smaller caseloads, smaller caseloads ☺**



The best prescription for good health is good nutrition, and for the most part nature (in the form of whole foods) provides everything you need. Of course, not all foods are created equal - some contain higher concentrations of certain vitamins and minerals than others. When planning meals, incorporate lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, including these excellent natural dietary sources of 10 essential vitamins and minerals:

Vitamin A - carrots, sweet potatoes, canned pumpkin

Vitamin C - broccoli, red peppers, kiwi

Vitamin D - fatty fish (e.g., salmon), milk, eggs

Vitamin E - olive oil, nuts, sunflower seeds

Folic Acid - green leafy vegetables, lentils, beans, asparagus

Calcium - milk, cheese, spinach, canned salmon

Iron - beef, lentils, kidney beans

Magnesium - halibut, oatmeal, spinach

Potassium - dried apricots, bananas, orange juice

*Tip: Health Canada's **Nutrient Value of Some Common Foods** booklet lists the nutrient content for 1,000 common foods. Download it from Health Canada's website at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/fiche-nutri-data/nutrient\\_value-valeurs\\_nutritives-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/fiche-nutri-data/nutrient_value-valeurs_nutritives-eng.php), or follow site instructions to order a hard copy.*

## Finding the FACTs

By Stacy Crossland

**1. When did you join FACT?** I joined fact in 2004 after we adopted our son, Asher. It was such a positive experience that I wanted to share with other people so I joined FACT.

**2. What do you do for FACT?** I sit on the FACT BOARD and I do some recruitment but my favorite part is OCT training, which I set up and then train the prospective foster and adoptive parents. I do training mainly in Edson with Leanne. And Darlene has now informed me that I am the official technical consultant for FACT, but that's only because I can check telephone messages from another phone. Ha ha.

**3. Our family:** Our family is awesome! It's made up of myself, my husband, whose name is also Stacey, and our four kids. Asher, five, is technically our first-born. We got Asher through adoption straight from the hospital in 2004. Then in 2005, we adopted Nicolas, who was two and a half at the time, and is now six and a half. In 2007, we had our son Jaxon, now two, by birth. Our daughter Finley also came to us through birth and she is seven months old. Our children have all joined our family through different avenues and from different circumstances, but they are all ours nonetheless and they are all siblings, not one more than the other. We love having such a diverse family!

**4. If you could change the system what would you change?** If I could change one thing in the system, it would be working harder at finding permanent homes for children over twelve. I would have the children be their own advocates, along with their worker. I believe that would lead to a higher adoption rate for older children.

## FASD Caregiver Training

By Ruth Snyder

On Saturday, May 2, fifty caregivers from around Region 7 gathered for the first installment of the FASD Caregiver Training. Facilitator, Donna Debolt, reminded us of the prevalence of FASD, the cause of FASD, how it is diagnosed, and the massive fallout of FASD. She also gave us some tips on dealing with individuals who have FASD. (Coping strategies will be the main focus of the fall training session.)

FASD is present in 1/100 Alberta births. 80% of these individuals end up in other caregiver's homes. 50% of children in care have FASD. Donna refocused us to the gift these children give, in that they force us to cooperate.

As we know, FASD is caused by the mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy. Drinking during the first trimester affects facial characteristics, during the second trimester the baby's structure is changed, and during the third trimester the baby's size is affected. Most importantly, **drinking during any trimester affects brain development.** Alcohol damages the brain more than any illegal drug! It causes dehydration which results in cells dying.

Donna used several word pictures to help us understand individuals with FASD. She said they are capable of developing all sorts of files, but they have no filing cabinet to organize their files. Thus, they are able to learn, but not necessarily able to remember what they know. They are individuals who operate with no steering wheel or brakes in life. They are "1 second kids in a 10 second world."

Donna encouraged us as caregivers to do our part in getting these kids diagnosed and assessed. She stated that diagnosis "gets us in the right city" and assessment "gets us on the right street." Once we know how/where these kids function, we can adjust our expectations and supports accordingly. In school, the focus should be on life skills, job skills, public service, and academics. Living with these individuals is not easy, but if we work together we can give them hope and a brighter future.



## Region 7 Foster Care Society

### A note from Bev Towe

It is with great regret that as of April 1, 2009 Emile Pelletier, the president of our Regional council and Paulette Kopp, honorary AFPA director, retire their posts. Emile and Paulette have given many years of service to us all. They will be greatly missed. I know all of our members wish Emile and Paulette all the best in their new endeavors.

Your new executive committee consists of:

President	Bev Towe
Vice President	Steven Lander
Treasurer	Brian Golding
Secretary	Robin Strome
AFPA Director	Kim Lewis

Our annual retreat was a great success with over 130 participants. A great weekend was had by all. Good job to the committee and the town of Bonnyville.

### A note from Robin Strome

I thought I would write a quick note after a wonderful weekend at the Bonnyville conference this year. I personally had a great time. I learned something new, met old acquaintances, and danced the night away. I was able to assist with training a couple of courses this year. I believe every time I train, I learn more from the group than sometimes I am able to share. This year I had an "Ah Ha Moment" that I wanted to share. On Saturday afternoon I was a co-trainer on Severe Behaviour and the material was very lengthy and covered a tough subject. We ended up in a classroom above a hockey game, with music blaring and children cheering below us. Approximately 47 attended the course, a large group. As we went through the material we would have moments of silence and then moments of a goal being scored and then loud music.

So how do I have an "Ah Ha Moment" in all of this? We expect our special children to sit in a class with noise and distraction and lights and sound and they are to behave and sit and learn. Wow! I had a hard time, and I knew the material. For me it was an afternoon in my children's shoes. "Ah Ha!" I now understand a little better. So thank you, Bonnyville. I will take away an amazing experience.

### Low Fat Apple-Cranberry Crisp

Makes 4 servings

4 c. (1 L) peeled, cored, thinly sliced apples

¼ c. (60 mL) fresh or frozen cranberries

1 tsp. (5 mL) lemon juice

2 Tbsp. (30 mL) granulated sugar

½ tsp. (2.5 mL) ground cinnamon

Topping:

¼ c. (60 mL) quick oats

2 Tbsp. (30 mL) all-purpose flour

2 Tbsp. (30 mL) brown sugar

½ tsp. (2.5 mL) cinnamon

¼ tsp. (1 mL) nutmeg

2 Tbsp. (30 mL) butter

Combine apples, cranberries, lemon juice,

sugar and cinnamon in a bowl; toss to coat. Place mixture in a lightly buttered one-quart casserole dish. Cover. Bake at 375°F (190°C) for 25 minutes. In a bowl, combine oats, flour, brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Cut in butter to form a crumbly mixture. Sprinkle crumbs over the apple mixture. Return to oven (uncovered) and bake for an additional 20 minutes. Serve hot with low-fat vanilla yogurt ice cream.



## Core Training Questionnaire

We need your input to help plan the Caregiver Core Training for 2009/2010. Please take a few minutes and fill out the questionnaire below and return it by fax, email or snail mail to:

**Ulrika Jensen**  
**#100, 111—54 Street**  
**Edson, AB T7E 1T2**  
**Fax: 780-712-7277**  
**E-mail: [Ulrika.Jensen@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Ulrika.Jensen@gov.ab.ca)**



How often do you attend training:

Monthly    Quarterly    Yearly

Have you attended any Core Training Sessions by video conference?

Yes    No

What is your training preference:

Video conference    Face to Face

What is your likelihood of attending video conferencing training?

Never    Occasionally    Whenever possible

What is your likelihood of attending face to face training?

Never    Occasionally    Always

What do you *like* about: Video Conference Training?

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What do you *not like* about Video Conference Training?

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What is your preferred training time?

During the week - day    During the week - evening    Weekend

Please tell us your location: \_\_\_\_\_