



## Life-Long Learning at Family Day

At Family Day Care Services, we focus on doing all that we can to ensure all programs are high quality. On an ongoing basis we have a variety of ways to make sure that we keep our knowledge about children, families and communities up to date. Our approach to staff education is purposeful and is guided by the goals set out in our strategic plan. As an organization, we strongly believe in the concept of “life-long learning”. This means that we never stop learning and that in every situation in our day-to-day business, we seek out opportunities to improve our knowledge both formally and informally.

Each year, Family Day staff, supervisors, managers and home child care caregivers participate in a variety of workshops and conferences to develop professional skills. Professional development is also an opportunity to meet others in our line of work and develop strong relationships and partnerships with them.

Much of what we learn is based on current research in early childhood education and care. Workshop topics have included: curriculum development, caring for children with special needs, child guidance and health and wellness. Evening workshops and “lunch-and-learns” are simple ways that we add new learning opportunities into our daily routines.



Vilma presenting at Don Valley East OEYC

Staff in our Ontario Early Years Centres and Family Resource Programs receive training to run free workshops for parents and caregivers. They then offer parenting programs to families. Guiding behavior, toilet learning and feeding the picky eater are examples of general workshop topics that are offered. Some families also register for parenting series that focus on children with special needs or infants and toddlers. We hear from parents and caregivers that these sessions are very helpful and build their confidence in raising children.

As a learning organization, Family Day staff mentor over 250 students from community colleges and universities in the Greater Toronto Area each year. Most of these students are studying early childhood education or advanced studies in special needs. In this relationship we are partners with community colleges and universities in teaching students. This connection provides opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience and first-hand knowledge in the sector. We are proud of these partnerships. Many of them have been established for many years and create positive and valuable experiences for both students and staff invested in the work of building strong communities.

We are very excited to see the level of commitment from staff who have made a personal decision to go to university, to take undergraduate studies or undergraduate certificate programs at Guelph-Humber University, York University/Seneca College and Ryerson University.

One partnership that we have built this past year is with Ryerson University. This unique collaboration offers off-campus learning to staff at Family Day. One evening a week a Ryerson professor delivers a class in the Family Supports Certificate program at Family Day’s Gordon Baker location. The first course had 15 students registered. The registration for the second course has increased and includes community members.

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(Learning, continued)

There are several benefits to this collaboration. Staff are able to study part-time as they work full-time. They bring new insights to the work that they do with the children and families. The off-campus setting eliminates the requirement of an additional commute downtown to Ryerson. For many students this has been a very smooth and positive transition to taking university courses since establishing their careers. Students have shared their reflections about what they are learning. Concepts such as the evolving definition of “family” and the impact of stress on families, particularly those who are newcomers to Canada, are very applicable to the way that we understand the needs of the children and families that we work with.

It is a time of transition for early childhood educators in Ontario. As we move forward in this era of change, we will continue to make a great contribution to the communities we serve through our expertise and our commitment to life-long learning.

For more information about these staff learning opportunities, please contact Diane Daley, Director, Development and Programs at [ddaley@familydaycare.com](mailto:ddaley@familydaycare.com).



working on a group project in the Ryerson course

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## CEO's Message

The world of early learning and care is undergoing some transformational first steps towards changing our sector in major ways. The first phase of the implementation of the Early Learning Program for kindergarten-aged children will begin in September 2010. The recent announcements on April 27 by Minister Broten (Children & Youth Services) and Minister Dombrowsky (Education) focus on the move of the Child Care Policy unit to the Ministry of Education with the licensing to follow at some point in the near future. This sends a very clear message that child care is now being viewed as education and as this transition is fully implemented it will in time clearly impact the world of child care.

From a parent's perspective, the result of these changes may not be apparent for many years until this provincial government's vision of full-day early learning is fully in place. At Family Day it is our intention to continue to work with all of the key stakeholders to ensure that children and families have access to accessible, affordable early learning opportunities that complement their families' needs and ensure that all children enjoy an equal start in life.

A core foundation of Family Day has been our licensed home child care program and for many it has been the root of our organization over the last 40 years. This year we celebrate the contribution of one of our caregivers in licensed home child care, Viola Roberts. In Vi's career as a home caregiver she has had a positive impact on over 100 children and families. Thank you, Vi, for your dedication and valuable contribution.

It is important to continue celebrating such personal milestones as we move forward with new opportunities in the field of early learning and care.

cheers,

*Joan Arruda*

[ceo@familydaycare.com](mailto:ceo@familydaycare.com)

## Toronto/York Caregiver Appreciation Dinner

Flowers of all sorts and colours bloomed brightly at the Qssis Banquet Hall in south Scarborough on Thursday evening, May 13, 2010. A festive spring atmosphere was created for the annual celebration for the caregivers in the Toronto and York Home Child Care Programs.



Vi (right) and Misha, her Coordinator

After a delicious buffet dinner, a total of 24 caregivers were recognized for their years of service to the children and families they care for every day, every week throughout the year. A special presentation was made to Viola Roberts of the Toronto Home Child Care group who is celebrating 40 years as a Family Day caregiver. Outstanding Vi and we look forward to celebrating 50 years with you!

Congratulations to all the caregivers in the Toronto and York Home Child Care Programs and a sincere thank you for your devotion not only to Family Day but to the hundreds of children and families that you care for. You are all truly amazing people. We could not offer quality home child care programs without you!

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## Dancing for United Way!

Once again the children in our centres have participated in the annual *Dancing for United Way* dance-a-thon. The babies moved to the music and of course, the school age children enjoyed developing routines and showing off their moves.

Thank you to everyone who supported the children and donated to the various dance-a-thons.

Together, the children raised a little over \$6600. for United Way.

*Outstanding!*



## Justin — a true fighter!

In October 2008, we learned that one of our preschoolers, Justin, had been diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer. Suddenly, both Justin's world and that of his mother, Tracy, were turned upside down as he required radiation and chemotherapy treatments for many months. To support the family, Family Day children and their families and staff held dance-a-thons in all centres to raise money to help with expenses. This fundraising effort reached unbelievable heights, raising over \$30,000.

Over the past year, the staff at the child care centre where Justin attended until his illness, have received reports and visits from Justin and Tracy. Many photos and a lovely 'thank you' letter were shared with Family Day staff in a display at our Staff Celebration in April. Since so many of our families participated in and contributed to this outstanding fundraising project, we want to share this update with you too.

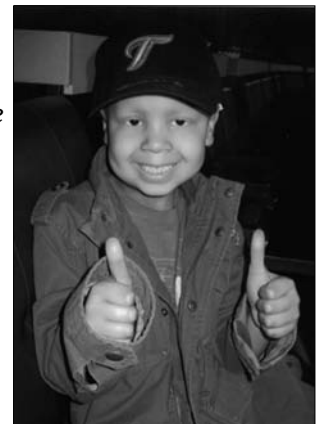
*Dear Family Day,*

*Justin and I would like to thank you all for such a wonderful fundraiser, which helped us out immensely during this difficult time in our lives. It is so wonderful to have such important people in our lives who genuinely care about Justin and myself and who helped make this journey a lot easier on us. We thank you for all your support, prayers, well wishes and gifts. You are all incredible people!*

*Justin is now finished his treatment and although he is being watched closely, and not out of the woods, he is doing wonderfully and I believe that it is due to the amazing support we have had and all of the prayers!*

*I hope you all realize the impact you had on both Justin and myself throughout this time. Family Day and all the staff will always have a special place in our hearts and hopefully we will always be in contact with you, as you helped Justin beat this horrible disease and come home!*

*We love and thank you all!  
Tracy & Justin*



# Staff Celebration

Family Day Board members and retirees joined over 220 staff to enjoy a delicious buffet and an evening of recognition of staff for their years of service to the agency on Thursday April 15, 2010 at the Mississauga Grand Banquet Hall.

*Juvenile Swing*, a jazz band of teen musicians serenaded us with outstanding music. After dinner, Stephanie from UGotDance taught us a few dance moves and a simple routine. Instructors from UGotDance work with our school age children in the Summer Fun Programs, developing creative movement and dance routines.

To all of the recipients of long-service awards, congratulations! and thank you for your dedication to the children, their families and the agency.

## 20 years



## 15 years



## 5 years



## 10 years



To our families, thank you so much for making it possible for us to close the centres at 5:00 p.m. on April 15. We greatly appreciate your support of the staff.



### Family Day Care Services

- licensed home child care
- child care centres
- school age programs
- Ontario Early Years Centres
- resource programs
- Toronto Integration Services Program

in Toronto East, York Region and the Region of Peel

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