



Spring ❁❁

Great work!

Last December, at the Kiuna Institution in Odanak, Christine Sioui Wawanoloath's new children's book "Moon's Tale" was launched. The book contains thirteen tales for children, all in English and in French, including nursery rhymes in the Abenaki language.

Extract from *Moon's Tale*:

"I am NANIBÔSSAD NSÔNKAW KASTA, she who walks in the sky thirteen times. I have thirteen other names depending on the time of the year when I am round as a blueberry in the night.

The millions of children who stare at me from their planet called AKI, THE EARTH or LA TERRE are all equal without any discrimination of race, religion, nationality or sex. They also have birthrights. My gift to them is one tale for each of my thirteen other names. My heroes are from many nations: the ones that walk, that crawl, that fly, and that swims."

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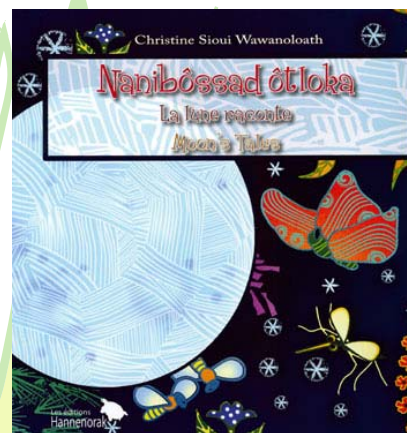


Christine Sioui Wawanoloath

Happy reading!
The early childhood team

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Is play important?

Following is a synthesis of experts' texts about play in order to highlight all that play brings to the child.

"Play is the work of childhood." Children spend 3 to 20% of their time and energy playing. Play is concerned with means and not ends (i.e., process of playing and not creating an end goal). **Play is also pleasurable!**



Researchers have identified several subtypes of play (locomotor, social, object, language, pretend, and sociodramatic play). During preschool years, play provides opportunities for children to foster academic and social competence preparing them for the demands of school and the external world. Indeed, children learn **various skills** contributing to their life success through play:

1) **collaboration** (teamwork); 2) **content** (math, science); 3) **communication** (oral and written); 4) **creative innovation**, and 5) **confidence**. Play prepares children outside the classroom as they develop life skills.

All these skills contribute to their success. Play also prepares children for life outside the classroom by allowing them to develop skills for everyday life.

Promotion of academic skills

Play provides a context for children to learn and improve their literacy skills. This is due to cognitive processes (problem solving, imaging, and categorizing) embedded in playful situations. Children engaging in sociodramatic play are usually better equipped to understand narratives in story books. This is partly due to their previous experiences in understanding others' intentions and playing different pretend characters, as well as their regular exposure to sophisticated language. Periods of free play and guided play are also associated with the development of executive function skills (i.e., skills related to problem solving, attention, and inhibition). This explains why children who play regularly tend to perform better in mathematics and reading in comparison to those who do not have opportunities to engage in play.



Promotion of social skills

Play contributes to the development of social competence by helping children:

- to regulate their emotions;
- to learn appropriate behaviours depending on the social context;
- to take turns when in group;
- to negotiate and understand others' points of view (e.g., negotiating roles in play "you'll be the mother, and I'll be the daughter"), and
- to cope with distress.

All these skills contribute to social competences such as making friends and increasing children's early school success.

These skills promote the acquisition of other social skills, such as the ability to make friends, and success in the early years at school.

If play is associated with children's academic and social development, educators and parents are encouraged to create play environments that will stimulate and foster children's learning. Depending on the type of play, research suggest providing toys that enhance children's:



- motor coordination and physical skills (e.g., challenging forms of climbing structures);
- creativity (e.g., building blocks, paint, play dough);
- mathematics skills (e.g., board games "Chutes and Ladders"
- estimation, counting, and numeral identification);
- language and reading skills (e.g., plastic letters, rhyming games, making shopping lists, bedtime story books, toys for pretending).

Furthermore, researchers suggest that setting up literacy-rich environments such as a "real restaurant" with tables, menus, name-tags, pencils and notepads, are effective to increase children's potential in early literacy development. Educators are also encouraged to adopt a whole child approach that targets not only literacy learning but also the child's creativity, imagination, persistence and positive attitudes in reading.

Interveners must ensure that a curriculum based on playful learning includes activities that are perceived as playful by children themselves rather than only by the teachers. Lastly, most experts agree that a balanced approach consisting of periods of free play and structured/guided play should be favoured.

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Encyclopedia
on **Early Childhood**
Development



The place of screening in preventive action

Certain preconceived ideas are often associated with the word “screening”.

“He’s still young; we’ll wait and see...”

“I don’t want to evaluate, it places a label on the child.”

“What if I screen a delay that isn’t one...”

“Even if we screen, that doesn’t provide us with services or strategies!”

“The parents are not objective enough to fill out questionnaires on their children.”

These are some of the phrases that are commonly heard in the day-to-day lives of the interveners working among young children. Through this article, we will attempt to clarify the actual meaning of screening by specifying its definition and situating it within the continuum of early intervention (observation-evaluation-stimulation). This article aims to provide certain information on screening while offering the opportunity to foster a reflection on your understanding and the place you give to screening in the support you provide to the children.

“He’s still young; we’ll wait and see...”

The actual essence of screening is prevention. This preventive action attempts to foster a more optimal developmental trajectory among children, thereby avoiding the appearance of social or educational adaptation issues. It is now recognised that the earlier we take action, the greater the beneficial effects will be on the child. Screening allows for detecting the special needs of the young children with the objective of offering stimulation for skills that are late in appearing or even, if necessary, to access specialised services more quickly.



“I don’t want to evaluate, it places a label on the child.”

Screening is first and foremost observing the child in association with the developmental points of reference. However, we sometimes confuse screening and evaluation. And yet, it is very important to differentiate the two because they do not serve the same functions. Screening mainly allows for taking a look at the child’s development and identifying whether or not the child is at-risk in one or more areas of his/her development. As for the evaluation, it allows for establishing a complete assessment of the child according to the developmental areas, either to obtain a range of his/her strengths and needs (functional evaluation) or to diagnose a child’s problems in one or more aspects of his/her development (diagnostic assessment).

“What if I screen a delay that isn’t one...”

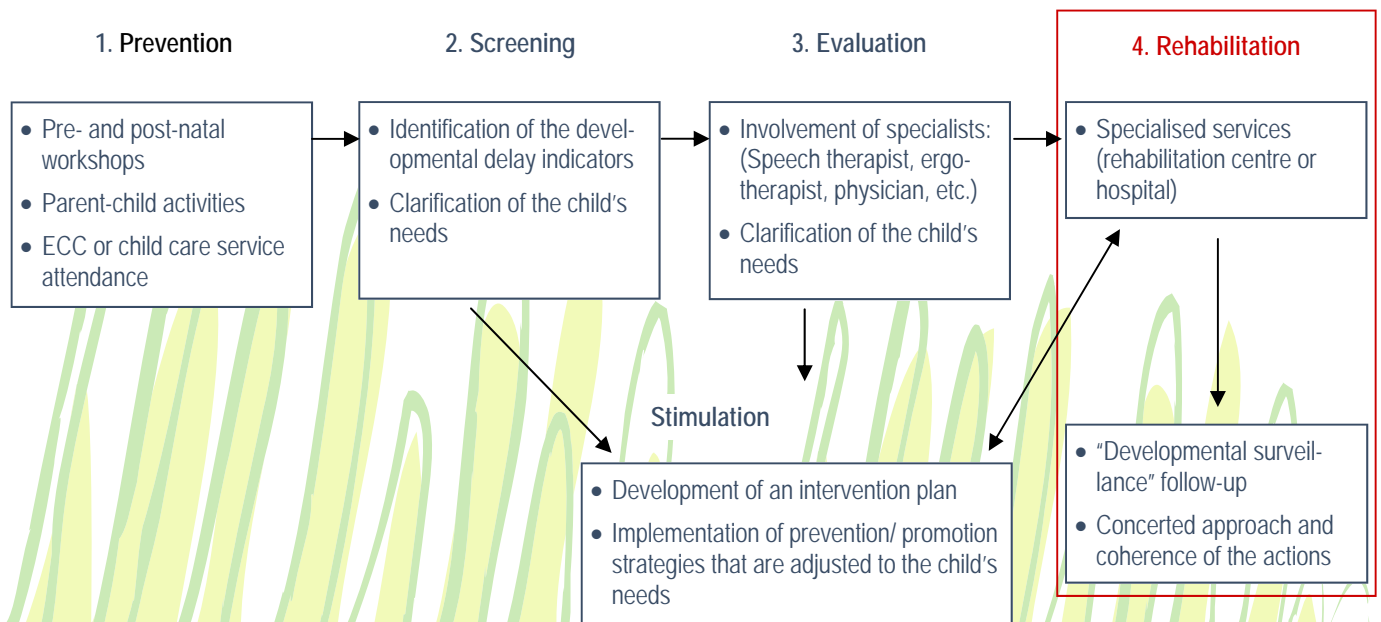
In early intervention, oftentimes you are the starting point. Along with the parents, the early childhood interveners have the opportunity to see the child in many contexts, observe his/her behaviours and attitudes, etc. Following your observations, sometimes concerns may arise regarding the children. Screening allows for objectivising our observations and especially for connecting them with the developmental stages. It also assists in identifying the child’s needs and is therefore one of the first steps for early intervention.

Screening is therefore not only a matter of need detection– it is also one of the support process steps.

“Even if we screen, that doesn’t provide us with services or strategies!”

Detecting and clarifying the needs of a child is an essential step to any help provided. It constitutes a starting point and the more complete it is, the clearer the strategies to be implemented will be. This idea goes against the belief that is sometimes present that “I can’t do anything, I’m not a specialist” or “We have to wait for the evaluation”. The two example situations described below demonstrate that even if the screening tools are not used in the same way or at the same time, their contribution nonetheless allows for detecting the needs and directing the action in a more targeted manner.

Illustration of a support process for children presenting a developmental delay
Our interventions are usually situated at the 1.2.3. level



Cont'd on page 6

The place of screening in preventive action (cont'd)

**“The parents are not objective enough
to fill out the questionnaires on their children.”**

Screening therefore requires that we ask ourselves questions regarding the tool that we choose and how and when we use it. There are many reflections that need to take place, many decisions to be made and many factors to be considered. In fact, beyond the choice of tool, it is necessary to structure the screening through a support process. Furthermore, certain principles are important to consider for targeting an optimal and effective screening process.

- The notion of “developmental surveillance” requires monitoring the child’s development in order to reassess his/her needs on a regular basis. The process must therefore offer the possibility to take repeated measures.
- The competencies of the interveners demand providing support for the consolidation of their skills in the areas of both child development and screening.
- The establishment of a concerted approach allows for having many sources of information and establishing collaboration with the parent and other resources. Including all of these partners becomes a winning factor for engaging all of the important people who gravitate around the child and fostering coherent and complementary actions.



This article sheds some light on screening, and at the same time, aims to give early intervention its rightful place. It bears witness to the vital contributions of all of the interveners who work with our young children. In fact, beyond their mission focused on taking care of the children, they are often, along with the parents, those who have the greatest impact on child development. **Observing, screening and describing the child** are actions that are necessary to identify the needs of the children more accurately and to address them as adequately as possible. It is important to favour these actions and support them using tools, training and a planned support process that allows for carrying them out with more confidence and consolidating them into the practice.

Source: Text written by CASIOPE for the FNQLHSSC

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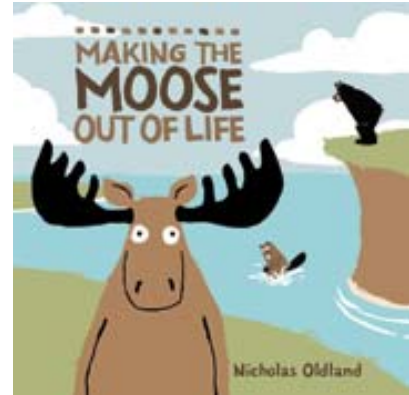
Making the Moose Out of Life

by Nicholas Oldland

There was once a bear that had an appetite for hugging everything in sight - even creatures that bears have been known to eat. One day, the benevolent bear meets up with a human. This human proceeds to do something the bear cannot understand: he raises his axe and begins to cut down a tree. Suddenly the bear doesn't feel like hugging anymore and must make a difficult decision on how to stop this destruction in his forest. The environmental message of *Big Bear Hug* is both funny and powerful, while simple enough to engage very young children and show them the awesome power of a hug.

For children ages 2 to 7

Suggested retail price: \$9.99. 2009, Kids Can Press



Big Bear Hug

by Nicholas Oldland

From the creator of *Big Bear Hug* comes the comic-adventure story of a mild-mannered moose that learns how to take life by the antlers. This moose may live in the wild, but he doesn't act it — he watches from the sidelines as his friends have fun. Every now and then, he wonders if he's missing out on anything. When the moose finally takes a chance and goes on a solo sailing trip, a raging storm carries him far from everything he knows. Will he curl up in a ball and cry, or make the most of it? The moose's unlikely hero-journey is a lighthearted, contemporary fable that celebrates living life to the fullest.

For children ages 2 to 7

Suggested retail price: \$9.99. 2010, Kids Can Press.

The Busy Beaver

by Nicholas Oldland and Claudine Azoulay

The busy but careless beaver spends his days following random impulses, rarely thinking things through and leaving in his wake a devastated forest filled with stumps, half-nibbled trees and injured, homeless animals. But then one day the beaver finds himself on the wrong side of a falling tree, which as it turns out, is just the thing to knock some sense into him. After reflecting on his behavior, he decides to make some changes. Soon, the now wiser and gentler beaver is getting down to the business of making things right, much to the delighted surprise of his forest friends. This charming story from the creator of *Big Bear Hug* and *Making the Moose Out of Life* gently teaches youngsters how to take care with others, as well as the world around us.

Suggested retail price: \$9.99. 2011, Kids Can Press.





Handwashing: the best prevention for colds and flu

Canadian Child Care Federation



Cold and influenza (or 'flu') viruses are found in the nose and throat. The viruses spread through droplets in the air when someone coughs or sneezes. They also spread when people touch objects that have the virus on them.

Washing your hands and your kids' hands is the best way to stop the spread of germs. You are always collecting germs on your hands, by opening doors, wiping faces, playing with children's toys and changing diapers. You cannot avoid them, but you can reduce the chance of passing them to others by washing your hands regularly.

When should we wash our hands:

- before cooking or eating
- before feeding a baby or child (including breastfeeding)
- before giving medication to a child
- after changing a diaper
- after using a toilet and after helping a child to use a toilet
- after taking care of a sick child
- after handling pets or animals
- after cleaning pet cages or litter boxes
- after wiping or blowing your own or your child's nose
- after preparing food

When should children wash their hands:

- before eating or handling food
- before water play
- after using the toilet
- after playing outdoors or in sand
- after laying with pets or animals



Four steps to proper handwashing

1. Wet your hands under running water.
2. Scrub your hands well with soap.
3. Rinse your hands under running water.
4. Dry your hands with a clean towel.

How should parents wash their baby's hands?

- Wash your baby's hands with soap and a warm, wet, fresh towel (either paper or cloth).
- Rinse the baby's hands with another fresh, warm, wet towel.
- Dry the hands well.

When water and soap are not available, use pre-moistened hand wipes or alcohol based. Keep hand rinses out of the reach of children because they may be harmful if swallowed. It is important to rewash your hands as soon as you have access to plain soap and water!

* Tip *

The poster "Atchooo!" shows children simple hygiene rules to reduce the spread of infections. Here is the link to download it: http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/SG_affiche_atchoum_en.pdf

Enlarge the pictures, cut them out and coat with plastic. Put them where the children will see them. Act them out, talk about them with the children but also, repeat these actions often to reduce the spread of infection in your working environment.





Activities of the month

For beginners...

- ☼ **The balloon:** since they move very slowly through the air, balloons are ideal for learning how to catch. Throw it up into the air and try to catch it before it touches the ground.
- ☼ **The stuffed toy toss:** as is the case for balloons, stuffed toys are slower than most balls and are therefore perfect for getting acquainted with throwing. Since they are soft, they are recommended for those who are afraid when a ball is headed towards them and therefore try to avoid it or shut their eyes. They stimulate children to want to try to catch them.

For those who have been initiated...

- ☼ **Racquet-balloon:** allows for learning how to use a racquet as an extension of one's arm in order to

propel the balloon towards the ceiling. This activity requires an additional level of motor organisation and planning. Start with a shorter handle in the beginning.

- ☼ **The target:** aim for a target on a wall or a container placed a few feet away on the ground in order to practice throwing in a more controlled and accurate manner.

For the enjoyment of playing together and to sharpen listening skills...

- ☼ **The musical ball:** while sitting in a circle and passing a ball around as the music plays, the one who has it in his/her hands when the music stops must perform a challenge with the ball (i.e. throw it into the air and then catch it).



A useful tip

In your setting, have you observed a child who seems to have problems related to coordinating his/her movements? Does he/she have problems catching? Does a child have issues with his/her fine motor skills? Is manipulating tools such as a pair of scissors difficult?



Call us: we can help! Do you have one or more children experiencing difficulties? Feel free to call us at 418-623-0640 or to write us at crede@bellnet.ca, we will be happy to help you. We have a whole range of ideas, projects and training to offer.

The "Ergotruc" is a courtesy of the *Centre Régional d'Ergothérapie pour le Développement de l'Enfant (CREDE)*

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Did you know that...

Games using balls that are seemingly so simple are nonetheless extraordinary activities for your little ones. They allow children to develop their visual-motor coordination. By making adjustments to catch the ball, a child learns hand-eye coordination. It is a wonderful exercise in order to prepare for reading. It develops many visual perception skills (depth and speed perception, visual tracking skills, etc.) and it develops the basic concepts associated with movement through space and the position of one's body in connection with another object. Bilateral coordination is also solicited:

both sides of the body are required to work together.

The movement planning and timing skills are also developed when playing ball activities.

It's a good thing that playing with balls is so enjoyable and therefore captivating for most children!





Reading and writing material

Children become acquainted with reading and writing in several ways. They try to imitate adults, implement their own ideas, solve problems and learn on their own the connection between speaking and writing. Adults can contribute to this learning process by setting up an

area that is devoted to reading and writing. Integrate these activities into their games! Below, you will find a list of tools that can help young children to learn how to read and write while having fun.

Organisation of an area that is devoted to reading and writing

- ✿ Table (adapted size that you can adjust yourself)
- ✿ Chairs
- ✿ Desk and chair
- ✿ Low and accessible shelves
- ✿ Bulletin board
- ✿ String and clothespins (to hang their work)



Writing material

- ✿ Chalkboard and blackboard
- ✿ Chalk (various colours)
- ✿ Flipcharts
- ✿ Paint
- ✿ Paintbrushes
- ✿ Sheets of paper (white, lined, of different sizes, colours, thickness and texture... recycled paper is excellent!)
- ✿ Markers (erasable, non-toxic, large- and fine-tipped)
- ✿ Colouring pencils
- ✿ Erase boards, erasable markers and erasers
- ✿ Notebooks
- ✿ Binding material (stapler, puncher, string)
- ✿ Scissors (for the older and preschool-aged children)
- ✿ Computer and educational software
- ✿ Birch bark
- ✿ Leather

For pretend play

- ✿ Notebooks
- ✿ Envelopes
- ✿ Fliers, catalogues, coupons
- ✿ Magazines
- ✿ Food containers
- ✿ Folders
- ✿ Mailbag and mailbox

Discovering numbers and letters

- ✿ Magnetic boards and magnets in the shape of numbers and letters
- ✿ Blocks and puzzles on which numbers and letters are printed
- ✿ Sponges and stickers in the shape of numbers and letters, stamps
- ✿ Educational books on the alphabet and numbers





Craft: Hand Drum and Beater

Drums have always been an important part of Wendat culture. Drums are played during ceremonies and accompany singing and dancing. The beat of the drum symbolizes the beating of the heart for the Wendat.



Materials

- two balloons
- a round plastic container
- two elastic bands
- art supplies to decorate the drum (optional)
- piece of material for stuffing
- stick or tree branch measuring about ½ inch in diameter, and 12 inches long
- string or wool (optional)



Step 1: Cut the bottom off a round balloon (before it's blown up).

Step 4: Cut the bottom off another round balloon. Stuff scraps of fabric into the end of the balloon to make a small ball. Poke the stick into the stuffed balloon. Gather the opening of the balloon around the stick and fasten with a rubber band. If you like, you can cover the rubber band with string, wool or a leather lace.



Step 2: Stretch the balloon over the plastic container. Secure the balloon with a rubber band.

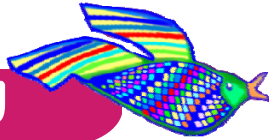


Step 3: Decorate your hand drum (plastic container).



Now you can let the children play with their drums!

See how many different rhythms you can make.



How Glooscap Created Sugarloaf Mountain

As retold by Elder: Margaret Labil-lois and Luke Simon of Big Cove

A long time ago, the people used to live near the riverbanks in the summertime, and they could watch all the salmon going up the river to spawn. One day, they noticed the salmon could not get up the river anymore.

Remember, in those days the beaver were very, very big. And they had built a dam across the Restigouche River. That is why the salmon could not get up the river to spawn.

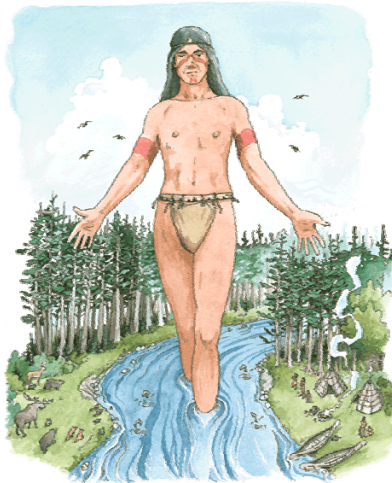
The people were very upset indeed! Because they knew if the salmon could not get up the river to have their babies, there would be no more salmon and they would have none for food in the winter.

So they held a council with all the people. They said that they didn't want to rely on Glooscap. They decided they would go out in their canoes to fight the beavers.

The men got in their canoes but when they got close to the beavers, they splashed the water with their huge tails. The canoes and the men went flying up into the air and fell into the water. They could not get past the beavers in order to destroy the dam. The beavers were just too big.

So they swam ashore and they reconsidered calling Glooscap. At the time, Loon was Glooscap's messenger. They asked Loon to call him.

Loon made his wailing sound and called Glooscap. It was carried across the water to Glooscap, and our friend soon came riding on the back of his whale.



Glooscap asked them, "Why did you call me?"

They tell him about the beavers and how they had made a dam all the way across the river, and how the salmon could no longer get up the river to spawn. They say that they will not have any more salmon to eat if they can't get up the river and have their babies.

So Glooscap walked to the middle of the dam and hit it with his club.

When he hit the dam, parts of it flew away. One of these parts became an island. It is now called Heron Island. Another part that flew away is now called Bantry Point.

Glooscap caught the leader of the beavers and swung him around and around by his tail. When Glooscap let go, the beaver landed many miles away and turned into rock. Today, that rock is called Sugarloaf Mountain.

Glooscap then turned to the other beavers. They were afraid, so instead, he stroked their heads. And with each stroke, they became smaller and smaller, until they reached the size they are today.

Glooscap promised the people that the beavers in New Brunswick would never grow that big again. The beavers will not build a dam so big that it stops the salmon from getting through. The people will never have to worry about that problem again.



Did you know...

Fish is packed with omega 3 fatty acids which play an important role for both the brain and vision. However, certain types of fish contain too many contaminants for children who are in the process of growing up. It is therefore important to properly select the types of fish we offer to them.

Fish provides children with a wide range of nutritious elements such as high quality protein, iron, vitamin D and omega 3 fatty acids.

The omega 3 fatty acids (DHA) found in fish constitute the basic materials of the brain. Since the child's brain reaches its adult size at around five or six years, fish constitutes an important food in their diet.

Fish can also contain contaminants, such as mercury, in varying quantities. In order to reduce as much as possible the risks associated with mercury while benefitting from the virtues of fish, be cautious when selecting the fish and seafood to be served to your children.

General rules for consumption, established by the Quebec government

In this table, the species of fish are sorted into three categories based primarily on the types of diet (insectivore, benthivorous, piscivorous) of the fish or on their mercury content. Therefore, the contamination level increases from top to bottom in the table: the piscivorous fish present more contamination risks than the insectivore species (brook trout, etc.).



SPECIES	CONSUMPTION RULES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake whitefish • Brook trout • Other types of trout (except lake trout) • Rainbow smelt • Atlantic salmon • Tomcod • American shad 	No restriction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catfish • Sunfish • Sturgeon • Burbot • Sucker fish • Perch 	Recommended consumption: One (1) meal* per week or less
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bass • Pike • Tilefish • Muskellunge • Lake trout 	Recommended consumption: Two (2) meals* per month.

* One meal: 230 grams (8 ounces) of fresh fish

THEMATIC NETWORK



THEME



Water, Fishing and Fish

Gross motor skills



- If you are lucky to have a municipal pool near your childcare centre, it would be interesting to bring the class for a special outing, accompanied by parents.
- Get toddlers and preschoolers to move by asking them to lay down on their backs, arms straight along their body and wiggle while beating their legs as if they were swimming.
- During the summer, install a small pool outside. Place different objects in the pool and ask the children to get them.

Fine motor skills



- Make colored fish out of cardboard or other materials.
- Staple 2 shapes of the same kind of fish together and stuff it with cotton wadding and hang it in your class.
- Make fishing rods with branches and string. Hang a paper clip at the end. Make small fish and stick a small magnet inside. Simulate a fishing party.

Cognitive dimension



- Experiment with what floats and what sinks: take a small aquarium or water container, add objects that float and others that sink.
- Count the number of fish you made in the class.
- Play at what lives in the water and what lives on earth.
- Provide puzzles representing fish or fishing scenes.
- Classify fish by different categories: color, shape, etc.

Health—Wellness and Nutrition



- Taste different types of fish with the children. Discuss about each and everyone's taste.
- In order to involve the children in the cleaning and up-keep of the toys, have fun with them washing the toys.

Language and culture



- Name and write in your local language the name of the fish in your region.
- Name and write the parts of the fish's anatomy.
- Imitate the fish with your mouth.
- Sing songs about fish.
- Read stories or narrate legends about fish.

Parental and Family



- Ask a parent to prepare a fish with the children to show them the process.
- If possible, organise a real fishing party with available parents and family members.
- With the support of the nurse, inform parents about the benefits of a diet including fish and advantages of Omega 3.

Social, moral and affective dimension



- Make a collective art project: Get the children to paint a big blue paper surface. They may glue on the paper different elements associated with water and fish (rocks, seaweeds) to represent a river, the sea or an aquarium.
- Role games: In group, get the children to imagine that they are fish swimming in the sea (going around in the classroom). Pretend there is a storm, a bigger fish, fisherman...



Fish Filets Jardinière

Yields 4 to 6 servings

Prep. Time 10 mins

Cooking Time 25 mins

Ingredients

½ cup (50 ml) butter

1 tbsp (15 ml) corn starch

1 cup (250 ml) 1/8 inch (3 mm) carrots sticks

2 tsp (10 ml) chicken broth mix

1/4 cup (50 ml) chopped onion

1/4 tsp (1 ml) ground savory (optional)

Water

1 cup (250 ml) 1/8 inch (3 mm) zucchini sticks

1/2 tbsp (30 ml) lemon juice

1 1/2 lb (750 g) individually frozen* fish fillets (e.g. sole, cod, haddock, Boston bluefish, lake trout, lake whitefish)

Preparation

1. Melt butter in fry pan. Add carrots and onion; sauté 5 minutes. Add water to lemon juice to make 2/3 cup (150 ml).
2. Combine corn starch, broth mix and savory; stir in lemon juice-water mixture. Add to fry pan. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil and thickens. Reduce heat; cook 1 minute longer.
3. Stir in zucchini; spread in 15 x 10 x 3/4 inch (2 L) jelly roll pan; top with fish in single layer. Sprinkle with salt; cover with foil. Bake in 450 °F (230 °C) oven 25 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.
4. Remove fish; keep warm. Smoothly combine liquid from fish, vegetables and sauce; serve with fish.

Tips

*If you use fresh fish: sauté carrots and onion 5 minutes. Add zucchini; cook 3 more minutes. Increase lemon juice-water mixture to 3/4 cup (175 ml)



Blossoms and Blooms

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