



``A Brief History of the PCMG Baby Program in Vernon BC``

Jodie Haberstock – NOEL Coordinator April 2010

The Parent-Child Mother Goose has been well established in Vernon, especially with new parents and their babies aged 0-12 months. I was fortunate to begin the first PCMG class for this group in January 2004. It is such a thrill to watch those little bundles of joy grow and change in their reaction and enjoyment of different songs and rhymes.

The program saw us originally offer it to a small group of about eight families, which promptly grew to two groups of about 12. The program was offered seasonally through winter, spring and fall, and each session ran for nine weeks. As word traveled, funding came available to support additional groups. Soon, two classes were offered back to back on the same day at the Vernon Public Library. This made good use of our facilitators and registration increased to its full capacity of 16. The program grew from there.

The PCMG baby program expanded to four classes at the library by Spring 2008, with back to back classes on consecutive days. Facilitation has been amazing! We have had excellent people running the groups. There was turnover in our facilitators however, and soon, two mothers who had participated in the program took the First Time Teachers PCMG training. They each facilitated two programs with the lead person of the PCMG baby group.

The library has fully supported hosting the PCMG baby program as it reduces the work load for its workers by providing programming for this age group. At the library this availed personnel and funds to offer programming to older age groups, rather than a simplistic baby program that would not have such a strong focus on songs and rhymes, and would only run for 5 or 6 weeks twice a year.

The NOEL Project and the facilitators of the PCMG baby groups were really enjoying success with families in our community until a glitch was hit in late spring 2009. It became clear that funds typically received from the School District would be decreasing in September and that left us without enough dollars to support the PCMG baby group. The School District's focus for their dollars was the PALS program, the Ready Set Learn event, and any remaining funds could support PCMG programs in the schools. We had not applied for funding at the end of the 2008-09 fiscal year to support the baby programs, so we were in quite a bind. After much discussion and deliberation, it was decided to cut down on the number of programs

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... Mother Goose Across Canada ...

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We could only hope that the seemingly middle-class participants in the PCMG baby group would step up to pay for this awesome program. We would also seek out additional funding support from the Vernon Rotary, the Vernon Gyro Club, and corporate sponsorships.

September 2009 arrived and we let families know of the funding crisis and that this fee for service situation would be temporary. We would register families for one class, and when that filled we would open up another time slot. Interestingly enough, and to our surprise, we ran only one class for 15 participants. The registration fee was \$75 which only covered our costs of facilitation and snacks. We were surprised that more parents were not willing to attend a stellar program like this, regardless of cost.

Quite thankfully, a local realtor who had participated in the program the year before had received word of the funding plight and offered to help out with a donation of \$1000. This was used to cover the registration fee for any family who could not afford to pay. Sponsorship was offered to every family who called and inquired about the program just so they were not deterred from attending. Three families took advantage of it for each of the fall and winter sessions.

Hence, the PCMG baby program ran for the fall 2009 session to a much reduced group. It was difficult to accept that we were now charging for a previously free and universal program, but it seemed the only thing to do without dropping the program altogether.

Funding requests made throughout the fall fell flat and no money came in to support our little babies. It was very disheartening. We decided then to carry on with the fee for service for the winter 2010 session. Parents were not as willing to pay though and often asked our facilitators if funding had yet been found to support the program. Registration was lower for the winter session, attendance sporadic (even for a paid program), and the feeling was somewhat negative about the entire experience. We knew we had to receive funding for the spring session or we would cancel the PCMG baby group altogether. We couldn't carry on this way. It was really very hard on all of us.

Funding was received in late March through the North Okanagan Early Childhood Development Coalition

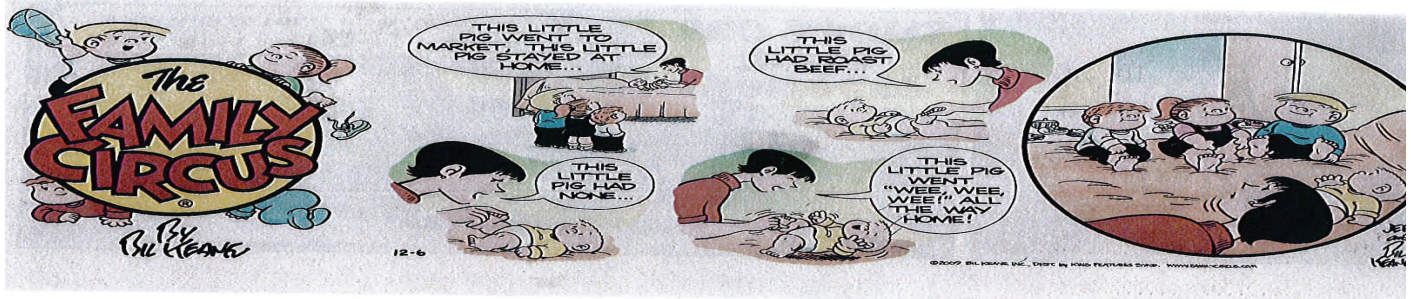
... Mother Goose Across Canada ...

Parent-Child Mother Goose® at the Calgary Public Library 2009

The fourteen P-CMGP's offered by the Calgary Public Library have just wrapped up and were once again a huge success. 13 programs took place in Library locations around the city this fall and 1 was held in an inner-city church, St. Stephen's. Registration was another whirlwind, with the 210 spots being filled in just minutes. 2482 babies and their intrepid parents and caregivers attended the programs this fall in spite of flu season and some early inclement weather in October and freezing temperatures in December.

All reports from participants were positive. The social aspect of the program makes it a highlight of the week for many. One mother, who was overdue with her second child, finally gave birth during the 7th week of the program and brought the 3-week old baby to the last few weeks of the program. She received such an outpouring of caring and good wishes from the other moms that she was moved to tears. Parents are learning the rhymes, songs and stories and practising them at home and enjoying the time spent just playing with their child. Many noted how valuable the program is in exposing their children to language and music.....integral first steps to literacy. Some expressed surprise at how much they enjoyed the oral stories. One mom said she noted her child was "mesmerized" by them and loved the repetition and cadence in many of them. A quote from one mom, "It has been really nice to learn new songs and rhymes together. They have become our 'special songs' and we sing them all the time. My 3 yr. old has come to half of the programs, and she and her sister have really bonded through the program. It is so rewarding to see all the children grow each week!"

A grandma of twins who just completed their 2nd session brought this in for me.



She said, "Diana, I thought you would like to put this up in your office. What this program has done for our babies can't be expressed. These rhymes will be part of their childhood, and they will repeat them over and over, just like in this cartoon. This just says it all!"

We currently have 23 Library staff trained to offer P-CMGP. The first 4 completed their certification in July of this year, and 13 completed it this month. The impact on our children's services staff who are involved in this program is fantastic. I think a highlight for me has been reading the reflections written by those who have completed their 3rd session. They have newly acquired confidence in their interactions with families and young children. Their repertoire of rhymes, songs and stories has grown and they are using them in all their programs. Many were initially concerned about how many rhymes, songs and stories they knew, and the thought of memorizing many was daunting. But after their 3rd session, they have a slate of elements they can use easily and without a second thought. As a result, the program becomes easier for them to deliver. One staff has incorporated many of the rhymes and songs into her outreach visits for 4 and 5 year olds, and is starting to include oral stories, something she wouldn't have done previously. The organizers at the venue she visits likes her programs so much they have asked her to instruct all the ECE teachers in how to do this new type of library "storytime".

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... Mother Goose Across Canada ...

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which receives funds through the Children First, Success by Six, and Building Blocks funding streams. This has enabled us to carry on with the program for another fiscal year and which again sees two back to back classes being offered on one day at the Vernon Public Library. Registration picked right up, the classes are full, and the facilitators report that the groups are such a joy to teach and the families are really into it. It is wonderful to hear our facilitators feeling happy again about the program, rather than having to be the bearers of bad news to the participants.

As word again travels about the free program, and as we regain that positive position in the community, higher demand is anticipated. Further partnerships are being sought on how to gather funds to support programming for this critical age group in our community. With many mothers returning to work (typically, upon discussion with participants, it seems 99% return to work full time) this may be the one time to connect with them about the value of early literacy, phonological awareness, songs, rhymes, repetition, and a special time of connection with their little one. We have certainly learned from the experience of charging for the PCMG program. We have vowed to not run the program at all rather than charge families to attend. We never anticipated the response that was received.

Little Bird, You are Welcome!

Mother Goose at the Toronto Festival of Storytelling



Program Director, Ruth Danziger, and Teachers, Maria Ordonez and Leeya Solomon, delight families with stories in English, Spanish and Tigrigna (Eritrean) at the Bata Shoe Museum on Saturday, March 27.

Please join us at next year's Festival: www.storytellingtoronto.org

What our Teachers Say ...

I love rhyming and singing, and I enjoy storytelling more and more. They bring parents and children together, and people in general together. They have the universal power to channel love, knowledge and experiences, to stimulate, intrigue, make you wonder, imagine and embrace, express, share and learn.

Amalia David,

East York East Toronto Family Resources, Toronto

... Mother Goose Around the World ...

Circle of the Sun Family Picnic - Beijing

On Sat May 22, the PCMG community in Beijing met for the 1st *Celebrating the Circle Family Picnic*. All former participants and their families were invited to come along to mark the importance of *Circle of the Sun* in their lives. It was a farewell celebration for Helen Robertson, who returns to Ottawa in July, and a chance for people to meet Susanne Zavratsky, her apprentice, who will be taking over the program in the autumn. About 35 families came along and it was a lovely event. We had time to talk, to see rapidly growing children and to do some favourite rhymes and dances. *Zoom Zoom Zoom* is an absolute favourite of all the groups here, so that was a must, and we also had walking ponies, sleeping bunnies, ticking clocks, choo choo trains and lots of fun. Here are a couple of photos of the day.

~ Helen Robertson

Zoom, Zoom

Zoom, zoom, zoom

We're going to the moon.

Zoom, zoom, zoom

We're going to the moon.

If you want to take a trip,

Climb on board my rocket ship.



Zoom, zoom, zoom

We're going to the moon.

5-4-3-2-1-BLAST OFF!!

Participants Doing Zoom, Zoom
at the picnic.

... Across Canada Continued ...

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Many mentioned the slower pace of P-CMGP, worried at first that they would be going too slow. But they have all come to realize that taking your time, being relaxed with the moms and babes, repeating the rhymes and songs several times, asking for feedback and allowing parents to contribute is key. As a result, they are taking these newly learned skills and applying them to their other programs for young children and their parents, with great success! A few comments from their reflections:

“I can honestly say this has been the most fun I have ever had with a program.”

“After completing my third round of Mother Goose, I know I am part of a worthwhile and well loved program which receives high praise from mothers in our community.”

“PCMG has had a great impact on my understanding of children’s programming. In my other programs I am more relaxed, allow more repetitions and use different teaching techniques. I learned how to talk to parents, how to make a crying baby happy again, how to get a busy toddler involved in a group game. Thank you Mother Goose!”

“Now after my third session, I can honestly say I have been won over completely by this program.”

“P-CMG has only improved my experience with children’s programs and I’m glad the Calgary Public Library gave us this training.”

“Long live Mother Goose!”

I think that last comment really sums it up, from both the Library staff perspective and that of the participants. Here is a shot of the Crowfoot Library group, raring to go!

Submitted by: Diana Villeneuve
Early Literacy Advocate, Calgary Public Library



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... Rhymes to Share ...

This is a rhyme in Spanish from Latin America folklore that the families of our program enjoy very much. It has a nice melody and we hold the baby's hands and swing back and forth.

Aserrin aserran (is the sound of sawing wood)

los maderos de San Juan (the woodcutters of San Juan make)

piden pan (they ask for bread)

no les dan (they don't get it)

piden queso (they ask for cheese)

les dan hueso (they get bones instead)

Maria Ordonez

PCMGP- Elmbank Community Centre

A Spanish rhyme taught to us by a mom:

PATY'S RHYME

Pollito, chicken; Gallina, hen.
Lapiz, pencil; Pluma, pen.
Ventana, window; Puerta, door.
Mesa, table; Piso, floor.

Diana Villeneuve
Calagry Public Library

Two Little Dickie Birds:

Two little dickey birds sitting on a cloud,
One named quiet (said in a quiet or whisper voice),
One named loud (in a louder voice)
Fly away quiet,
Fly away loud,
Come back quiet,
Come back loud.

I wrote this little rhyme for my son,
David, this January when he was about
3 months old.

**Tickle your tummy
Wriggle your toes
Count your fingers
Kiss your nose
Stroke your hair
Pinch your cheeks
Cuddle you tight
&
Now let's sleep!**

~Shana Parker

Share your program with the rest of the P-CMGP Network!

Write about your program for the Network News newsletter. It brings joy, strengthens the network and creates new energy when you share your stories across Canada and Australia. We love to include your stories, pictures and news. Please send submissions to Nancy Thurston, Communications Committee Animator: nancy@ns.aliantzinc.ca

Training Opportunities

Alberta

TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Calgary, Families Matter, August 30 & 31, 2010,
Corinna Totino, 403 205 5197, corinnatotino@familiesmatter.ca

Fort Saskatchewan, Families First Society, September 24 & 25, 2010
Lorella Julien, 780 998 5595 ext. 228, lorellaj@familiesfirstsociety.ca

British Columbia

TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Castlegar, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy, September 17 & 18, 2010,
Alana Murdoch, 250 365 6061, amurdoch@cbal.org

Ontario

TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Toronto, National Office of the P-CMGP, September 24 & 25, 2010,
Natalia Crowe, 416 588 5234 x 21, mgoose@web.net

Toronto, National Office of the P-CMGP, November 12 & 13, 2010,
Natalia Crowe, 416 588 5234 x 21, mgoose@web.net

STORYTELLING WORKSHOPS

Toronto, National Office of the P-CMGP, October 15, 2010,
Natalia Crowe, 416 588 5234 x 21, mgoose@web.net

If you are a program teacher who has completed your Apprenticeship, have sent in the necessary paperwork but have still not received a certificate, please contact Kim Heatherington at blairkim@shaw.ca. There may have been a gap between processing your paperwork and getting the certificate to you. We don't want you to think you have been forgotten!



SUPPORT THE PARENT-CHILD MOTHER GOOSE PROGRAM!

Become a member of the

Parent-Child Mother Goose Program® Because.....

- A strong membership demonstrates that our work has community support
- As an informed member you can become a voice for the program
- Your questions and comments can help us develop our resources, our programs and our outreach

But what kind of member should I be?

Program & Agency Members \$35.00 (Includes International Members)

- Receive three electronic newsletters each year
- May use the registered trademarked name and logo
- May photocopy newsletters or articles from the P-CMGP®
- Receive results of research and professional studies of the program
- Receive notification of special events and new publications
- May attend Annual General Meeting and elect the National Council Members
- Send us regular reports to help us advocate for the program and to plan for new resources and training
- Receive electronic copies of our brochure to assist with program promotion and outreach
- Your P-CMGP program is posted on our website for others to find!

Friends of Mother Goose (interested individuals who are not affiliated with a registered Parent-Child Mother Goose Program) \$25.00

- Receive 3 electronic newsletters each year
- Receive invitations to events and announcements of new publications
- May attend our Annual General Meeting and elect the National Council Members

Our membership cycle is January 1st - December 31st

Please mail this form with your annual fee and/or donation to: The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program®

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www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram

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Donations are vital to our ability to deliver and develop the program. You will receive a tax-deductible receipt for your donation. Charitable Registration Number 859460842 RR001

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This membership is for the program year: 20____ - 20____

Cuddle ... communicate ... connect