

## Newspaper Article for August

Submitted by: Sue Rossi (Shuswap Early Childhood Development Coordinator)

The Shuswap Early Childhood Development (ECD) Committee has a vision: "Communities in the Shuswap recognize the importance of the early childhood years, share responsibility for investing in young children, and support families in order to build the best possible future for all."

So what exactly does that mean? Our committee uses groundbreaking research from UBC (Human Early Learning Partnership), local knowledge, and partnerships with School District #83, Interior Health and many more service providers and agencies to address the needs of children prior to kindergarten entry.

Making families aware of the array of services and programs available to them is one of the important needs our committee has addressed, and one of the ways we've done so is by publishing the Shuswap Children's Directory of Services. This handy guidebook is revised regularly and is going into its fifth edition, with 6,000 copies distributed throughout the Shuswap. Artwork on the cover was created by local children through an art contest.

The Directory is meant for all families who want to know what services, programs and supports are available to them during the important early phases of development from pregnancy through childhood. Some families may be looking for child care, while others want to join a Mother Goose program or seek early intervention services such as speech and language specialists or dental services for children.

According to a recent study by researchers from the BC Children's Hospital and UBC (details in an August 3, 2011 Vancouver Sun article written by Pamela Fayerman), "Preschool programs and interventions have been shown to reduce the risk of school failure as families learn how to develop strategies and get linked up with the right resources."

Our committee needs your help to print the directories. Each directory costs about \$2.00. With recent cuts in government funding, we are doing our best to engage businesses and individuals in helping sponsor directory printing costs. Your donation can be made to the Shuswap Early Childhood Development Committee at the Shuswap Children's Association, Box 2579, Salmon Arm V1E 4R5. All donated funds will go directly towards printing costs, and official receipts are available. Donors will be recognized on or in the directory.

For more information, please contact Sue Rossi, Shuswap Early Childhood Development Coordinator at [ecd@shuswapchildrens.ca](mailto:ecd@shuswapchildrens.ca) or 250-833-0164.