

Community Connections – April 6, 2021

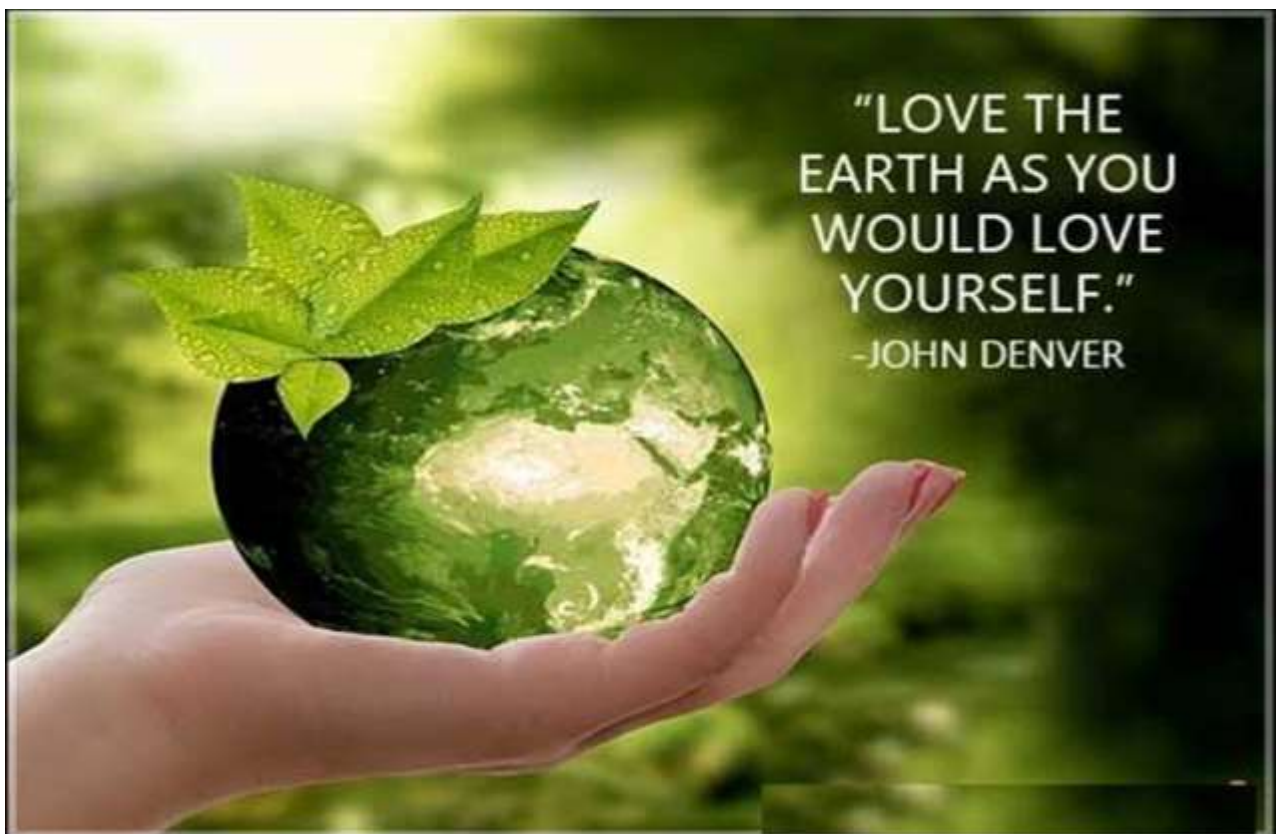


Good Morning:

Please feel free to pass this information on to anyone who might be interested.

You can find all of the past editions on Niagara Knowledge Exchange by [Clicking Here](#)

Also, please let us know if there is anything you have found that has inspired you and we will share in future newsletters



Spotlight idea: Celebrate Earth Day April 22

Earth Day 2021: [Click here](#) to Celebrate the Earth with Action and find out what other parts of Canada are doing to celebrate and protect our great earth.

Jour de la Terre 2021: [Cliquez ici](#) célébrons la terre par l'action!

#EARTHDAYATHOME: [Click here](#) to find environmental actions you can do at home for Earth Day

#JOURDELATERRECHEZSOI: [Cliquez ici](#) des actions environnementales à faire à la maison

Earth Day Virtual Celebration Links for Greener Learning: [Click here](#) to join Links for Greener Learning for their Earth Day Celebration that will run from Monday April 19th to Friday April 23rd.

Earth Day Activities: [Click here](#) for 5 things you can do for Earth Day from your home

Activité du Jour de la Terre à faire avec votre enfant: [Cliquez ici](#) pour laissez vos enfants développer leur intérêt pour le monde qui les entoure avec d'amusantes activités sur le thème de la Journée de la Terre!

Earth Day Activities for Kids: [Click here](#) to find activities sure to inspire you and your children or students to get creative and learn about ways to care for our planet.

Test Your Recycling Knowledge: Visit the Niagara Region's website to learn more about local Garbage and Recycling activities. Presentations, posters and more can be requested plus you can test your knowledge of recycling with their on-line quiz game – [click here](#) to get started.

Get outdoors and enjoy the time with the children with these resources:

- **Free Webinar: OutClass™ Outdoor Learning - Kindergarten & Childcare:** [Click here](#) to join Jill from Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds to Learn how to provide opportunities in your outdoor space that promote independent learning, self-regulation & increase attention span & focus.
- **Take a Minute to be in it - in nature!** [Click here](#) and let Jane Kirkland inspire you and your family to discover the joys of nature in your own backyard and neighborhood with these free downloads.
- **Springtime Outdoor Activities:** [Click here](#) for some simple ways to enjoy the outdoors and celebrate spring:
- **Activités de printemps que les enfants vont adorer:** [Cliquez ici](#) pour 10 activités simples et amusantes qui leur permettront de profiter de la beauté du printemps.

Check out these Local Activities and Resources:

Niagara Region Public Health offers a variety of prenatal services to support families in having a safe and healthy pregnancy.



Healthy from the Start *New*

A weekly drop-in prenatal program for eligible expectant parents, delivered in partnership with **Strive Niagara**. The program provides health information, social support, free vitamins, and access to a registered dietitian and public health nurse. Currently offered online via Zoom. Support people welcome to attend.

One-on-one appointment with a public health nurse Clients can talk about what to expect when baby arrives and receive extra supports during and after pregnancy.

Home Visiting For those who qualify and need additional support for a healthy pregnancy, a public health nurse can visit a client at home.

Online Learning Clients can learn from the comfort of their home and at their own pace. Free online prenatal education is available to expectant parents in Niagara.

For more information, visit [Niagara Parents – Becoming a Parent](#).

To register, connect with Niagara Parents at niagararegion.ca/parents or 905-684-7555

Ontario Autism Program's Foundational Family Service Guide at Bethesda [Click here to access](#) the guide of activities provided at no cost to for children/youth and their families who are registered with the Ontario Autism Program

Borrow a Ontario Parks Pass: Some of Niagara's local libraries have a new item available for borrowing – park passes for Ontario Parks. With your local library card, these passes are free to borrow and can open up whole new outdoor adventures. [Click here](#) to discover if your local library is participating in this program. Both the St. Catharines Public Library and Lincoln Public Library also have passes for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority parks that can be borrowed. [Click here](#) to learn more about St. Catharines and [click here](#) to learn more about Lincoln

Emprunter un permis de parcs de l'Ontario: Les bibliothèques participantes dans tout l'Ontario commenceront à prêter des permis d'utilisation diurne saisonniers de Parcs Ontario, gratuitement. [Cliquez ici](#) pour liste des bibliothèques participantes

Activities and Supports for you, your clients and families:

Screen-free fun! With Scouts Canada: [Click here](#) for a FREE Activity Finder with 150 educational, thoughtful and creative ideas to inspire you and your family to get active and have fun - all while staying safe.

Recherche d'activités avec Scouts Canada: [Cliquez ici](#). pour explorer des centaines d'activités à faire avec votre famille. Pour trouver l'activité qui vous convient, effectuez une recherche par groupe d'âge, durée de l'activité, saison et thèmes de programme

Virtual Zoo Trip: [Click here](#) to find a number of virtual zoo tours for kids.

The Royal Agricultural Virtual Experience: [Click here](#) for a unique opportunity to experience the very best in Canadian agriculture and food from your laptop, tablet, smart phone or desktop.

Strong Start to Reading: Strong Start to Reading is offering a wide variety of resources for parents and activities for children to help support learning and reading at home. [Click here](#) to visit the website and to begin exploring these free resources.

Stay Active Outdoors -

Springtime is an awakening for both educators and children! After a long winter hibernating indoors, we are all looking outside again. As the snow melts and the buds break, it's time to take advantage of the puddles and muddy areas on your playground with loose parts and tools.



Here is a list of supplies that can be used in muddy puddles to support active child led play:

- Metal bowls
- Spoons
- Ladles
- Buckets
- Garden trowels
- Child size spades
- Planks

Muddy play provides so many great sensory rich opportunities for social collaboration, problem-solving and risk taking. Many motor skills are being developed while all senses are being engaged which directly supports literacy, and school readiness.

- ✓ Big body play supports body awareness, self-regulation, focus and attention spans.
- ✓ Grasp and big body play in combination support the development of the bigger muscles that stabilize the smaller ones required for mastering a writing utensil.
- ✓ Fine motor muscles are being developed through the use of tools during muddy play.
- ✓ Mud is a wonderful medium to figure out how much pressure to use when transferring the mud into a bucket or bowl. This resistance or proprioceptive input directly informs motor planning around the use of markers, pencils, crayons or brushes.



To make these muddy activities a success, we need to eliminate barriers associated with muddy play:

1. Have children wear a one-piece rainsuits to keep them dry and clean for both morning and afternoon outdoor sessions. This usually lowers parents' concerns about messy kids. https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=tuffo&ref=nb_sb_noss_1
2. Have a storage unit or curriculum cabinet available for children to easily access their tools with independence and respect. Your tools will last longer, and it is a fantastic way to scaffold your kids taking responsibility during clean up time. Place these cabinets in your high traffic play areas for children to facilitate

programming that supports child led play.
<https://www.naturesinstruments.com/component/curriculum-cabinet/>

Stay up-to-date:

“Until vaccines are widely available, it's critical that we all continue to follow public health measures, stay home as much as possible and limit in-person social interactions to protect ourselves, loved ones, and community.” ~ Niagara Region Public Health

Ontario’s vaccine distribution implementation plan: [Click here](#) to learn about Ontario’s Vaccine Distribution Implementation Plan.

Plan de mise en œuvre de la distribution des vaccins de l’Ontario: [Cliquez ici](#) et en savoir plus sur le Plan de mise en œuvre de la distribution des vaccins de l’Ontario.

Niagara Health: The arrival of the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in the Niagara region is imminent. We are proud to work with our community partners to deliver the first doses of the vaccine in the Niagara region. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Niagara Health: L’arrivée des premières doses du vaccin contre la COVID-19 dans la région de Niagara est imminente. Nous sommes fiers de collaborer avec nos partenaires communautaires pour administrer les premières doses du vaccin dans la région de Niagara. [Cliquez ici](#) pour en savoir plus.

COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open: Read how we’re keeping Ontario safe and open, including regional health measures and sector-specific public health and workplace safety measures. [Click Here](#)

Cadre d’intervention pour la COVID-19 : Garder l’Ontario en sécurité et ouvert: Apprenez comment nous gardons l’Ontario en sécurité et ouvert, notamment au moyen de mesures de santé régionales et de mesures de santé publique et de sécurité au travail propres à chaque secteur. [Cliquez ici](#)

Ontario Government Covid-19 Update Page: [Click Here](#) (this site has the information available in many other languages)

Mise à jour Covid-19 du gouvernement de l'Ontario: [Cliquez ici](#)

Health Canada Covid-19 Update Page: [Click here](#)

Gouvernement du Canada - Maladie à coronavirus (COVID-19): [Cliquez ici](#)

**If I waited until I had all my ducks
in a row, I'd never get across the street.**

**Sometimes you just have to
gather up what you've got and
make a run for it.**

Judge Lynn Toler



We would like to apologize if you received multiple copies of this email. We are trying to reach out to as many early years educators and staff as possible. Please share with all of your staff, clients, families or anyone who is not on this email list.

Take Care and Stay Healthy

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Only go out
for essential
purposes



Avoid gathering
with people you
don't live with



Stay home and get
tested if you have
any symptoms



Keep 2 metres
apart from others



Clean your
hands often



Wear a face
covering correctly