

The Parent Page



FALL 2011

From a Parent's
Perspective ~

What to Wear?

by Roslyn Duffy



Situation

"It is cold outside. I am wearing a polar fleece pullover, wool slacks, and heavy socks with boots. My four year old daughter looks like an ad for a Hawaiian vacation. She balks at even the mention of a pair of pants, a sweatshirt, or (horrors) her coat. Today she dressed herself in a lacy skirt topped by a pale yellow top, with her summer sandals to complete her outfit. We need to go to the grocery store and her coat is lying on the floor like a battle banner between us."

Solution

Often the amount of clothing a child has on is a good indication of how cold the accompanying adult is feeling. Children above the age of two and a half are usually well able to maintain their body heat. One good measure of whether a child is dressed warmly enough is to feel her hands. An active child will have warm hands on even the coldest day. Sometimes that same child will be wearing only a sweater, a light jacket, or have her heavy coat unbuttoned. Meanwhile the adults in the nearby vicinity look like they are heading out to scale Mt. Everest in a blizzard. People have differing needs.

Rather than battle over what to wear, whether it is warm or cold outside, or if she needs a coat or not, help your child learn to make good choices. Children need safe ways in which to experience life. A child bundled up to her eyebrows in even the mildest weather does not know what it means to be cold. Even more surprisingly, children do not know that feeling cold and wearing certain types of clothing are factors that relate to one another.

Of course, adults tell children about coats, clothing, and warmth. But this is not the same as experiencing warm, cold, or the relationship of clothing to body temperature.

Imagine that you had never seen a lemon before. Others warned you that lemons are *sour*. You have no experience of sour. You are hungry and see a slice of lemon. Until you bite into it, pucker up, and squint at the taste, you don't understand what sour means. The next time you see a lemon you will be much less likely to sink your teeth into it. Sour is now a concept with which you have experience.

Back to the cold winter day. What does it feel like to be cold? How does clothing make a difference? Let your daughter head outside in her sundress, sandals, and laces. Simply put her warm clothes, socks, and coat in the car. She will start to notice her discomfort.

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Instead of telling her why she is getting uncomfortable, ask her to describe her problem. She might respond that her arms have bumps on them. Give her information and continue to ask questions instead of telling her all the answers. "Those sound like goose bumps. What do you suppose causes goose bumps?" She might surprise you and say that her arms have goose bumps because she forgot to eat all of her toast.

Children interpret experiences differently. This is a great opportunity for you to help her learn some new connections. Agree that eating toast is a very good idea but that it probably is not the reason she feels cold. Remain curious and invite her to think through this problem. She is likely to note that she is not wearing a coat. If she does not mention her coat, bring it to her attention. "I think you will feel much more comfortable with your coat on. Coats help keep our bodies warm." Then encourage her cooperation. "Your coat is on the seat. Do you need help getting it on?" This gives her the chance to feel that wearing the coat is her decision (an important distinction if power struggles are common to a relationship).



When adults invite children to learn life skills, children learn to make sound choices. Next time you are ready to leave, ask your child what she needs to stay warm. While she is learning to improve her choices, calmly include the coat in the supplies you gather for an outing. If a child does not begin to make more appropriate choices, it is time to change your own behavior. Store the summer dresses until the weather changes. The next time you leave home, don't pack the coat. Do this on a short trip when she can safely experience the natural outcome of her decision. (Do not leave the coat behind when heading out for an all day hike in the snow. That would be unsafe.) Set up opportunities that allow children to learn skills safely. When she becomes uncomfortable, commiserate with her. Assure her that you are confident she will remember her coat the next time. Trust her. She will remember.

*Roslyn Duffy is the co-author with Jane Nelsen and Cheryl Erwin of **Positive Discipline for Preschoolers**, Prima Press, and co-author with Jane Nelsen of **My First Visit to Preschool**, Fisher-Price. She is a 17 year veteran director of a child care program in Seattle, Washington, lectures and teaches classes for both parents and teachers, and is a counselor in private practice. She has four children of her own.*

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PO Box 3249, Redmond, WA 98073 800.221.2864 www.ChildCareExchange.com*

MED Interactive Guide

The Ministry of Education has launched an interactive discussion guide about how to create structures and processes that support personalized learning in the classroom. Teachers, parents and students are invited to participate and answer nine questions as a way of sharing ideas and perspectives on personalized learning.

<http://www.personalizedlearningbc.ca>

Embracing Diversity:

Sharing Our Songs and Rhymes

The Burnaby Public Library has developed an online community resource to inspire sharing across cultures. Songs are available in Arabic, Spanish, Mandarin and more!

<http://www.bpl.bc.ca/kids/embracing-diversity>



Circle of Friends

Circle of Friends is a FREE program for all parents/caregivers & children aged 0-6 years. Circle of Friends will re-open on September 6th. COF is available from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at Central Elementary and Tuesday and Thursday mornings at James Park Elementary.

For more information call 604.931.3400

Coquitlam Centre, the Coquitlam Public Library, School District 43 and the Tri-Cities ECD Committee present:

Family Learn and Play Event

Imagine, play and learn through math, stories, song, art and more! For children 3–10 years old. Parental supervision is required.

When: Last Wednesday of each month

Time: 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Location: Coquitlam Centre Mall (by The Bay)

Halloween

WorkSafeBC wishes everyone a safe and happy Halloween. For a list of articles and websites dedicated to Halloween safety techniques and strategies visit



www2.worksafebc.com/enews/101014/101014.htm

Tri-City Transitions Empowering Mother's Group Community Action Programs for Children

September 22, 2011

6:30 pm–8:30 pm

2420 Mary Hill Rd., Port Coquitlam

If you have children 0 to 6 years of age that have been impacted by some form of family abuse, this group is for you. Learn to reinforce positive behaviour and foster self-esteem. Reduce the stress of parenting; have fun!

Empowering Mom's Group is a free 8 week group designed for women to share experiences and discuss their unique parenting concerns in a safe and supportive environment.

For more information, please call 604.941.7111

Exploring Adoption?

Family Services Licensed Adoption Agency holds free general information sessions for prospective adoptive parents. You are encouraged to learn about local and intercountry adoption, and have a chance to informally chat with staff and adoptive parents over some light refreshments.

Information sessions are held at Family Services of Greater Vancouver's main office at 1616 West 7th Ave. (at Fir St.) Vancouver.

Next session is on Sunday, Sept. 11 from 2:00 pm–4:00 pm. To pre-register or to receive more information, please call Sarah at 604.736.7613

Visit www.fsgv.ca for a complete list of dates & times.

Burnaby Family Life

Baby and Me Second Stage

Burnaby Family Life is offering an on-going weekly support group for parents of infants and toddlers aged 6 to 18 months. Drop-in to learn baby songs and rhymes, engage in group discussions, and make new friends, while enjoying a healthy snack. A variety of topics will be covered, such as: parenting challenges; infant development; and infant health, safety and nutrition.

Held every Friday from 10:00 am–12:00 pm at Edmonds Resource Centre, Room 104–7355 Canada Way, Burnaby. Child care is provided. For more information, call 604.659.2230

Family Fun!

Burnaby Lake Regional Park Nature House

September 3, 4 and 5
10:00 am-4:00 pm

Speak with friendly park interpreters, get a park map, report wildlife sightings or learn about the park's flora and fauna through interactive displays. Stroll through the butterfly garden and discover which plants attract these colourful insects.

Meet at 4519 Piper Avenue off Winston Street.
Please call 604.520.6442 for additional information.



Treefest 2011

September 17
11:00 am-4:00 pm

2601 Lougheed Hwy. Riverview Hospital Grounds

Treefest is an opportunity to celebrate trees and environmental stewardship with an emphasis on the fine collection of trees on the Riverview lands. This free family festival features guided tree tours, live entertainment, blackberry tea served in Finnie's Garden, food concession and community group displays.

For additional information,
call 604.290.9910, or email donna@rhcs.org

Family Sports Drop-In

Date and Time to be announced
1st week in September
Alderson Elementary School Gym
825 Gauthier Avenue, Coquitlam

Introduce your 3 to 5 year old children to a variety of sports through cooperative activities and play. Parent participation is strongly encouraged. FREE

For additional information, contact Danielle at 604.933.6146 or email programs@placemaillardville.ca

Artists on the River

Friday, September 23, 5:00-9:00 pm
Saturday, September 24, 11:00am-4:00 pm
Fraser River Discovery Centre
788 Quayside Drive, New Westminster

Celebrate BC and World Rivers Day with a festival that honours the Fraser River. Artists and artisans in all media display their work. Enjoy live entertainment for all ages, and crafts for children and their parents. There is something for everyone!

www.fraserriverdiscovery.org

Salmon Come Home

Sunday, October 23, 11:00 am-3:00 pm

Salmon Come Home is designed to promote public awareness about the spawning salmon that migrate back to Coquitlam. Families can enjoy activities throughout the day, including performer Angela Brown, and a fun giant inflatable salmon that children are able to play inside.

Free parking available at Coquitlam City Hall, located at the corner of Guildford and Pinetree Way, which is a short walk to the event site...just follow the signs.

For further information, please call 604.927.6536

Submit a design for the 2012 Port Moody Community Banner

Celebrate the uniqueness of Port Moody by designing and painting a street banner celebrating all the faces of Port Moody. Deadline for designs is October 21.

Visit www.portmoody.ca for an application & details.

25th Annual Hyack Christmas Parade of Lights

Downtown New Westminster
Saturday, December 3 @4:00 pm

Adults and children alike will enjoy the Christmas Parade of Lights, with its colourful floats, live Christmas music, and creative Christmas costumes. Children of all ages are invited to bring Santa and Mrs. Claus their Christmas letters, which the Canada Post elves will collect along the parade route. Letters may be addressed to the North Pole HOH OHO, but should also include your return address, as Santa likes to write back.

Visit www.hyack.bc.ca for additional information.