



“You are My Sunshine...” How an Intergenerational Parent-Child Mother Goose Program® Cultivates Brain Development and Creates Community through Song.

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In the Next 90 Minutes....

- What is the P-CMGP®
 - History, benefits,
- Intergenerational P-CMGP®
 - Urban vs Smaller Community
 - Collaboration, Funding
- BC Council for Families
- North Shore Community Resources Society
- Kamloops Early Language and Literacy Initiative (KELLLI)

What is Parent-Child Mother Goose?



The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a **group experience** for parents and their babies and young children which focuses on the **pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs, and stories together.**

Parents gain skills and confidence which can enable them to **create positive family patterns** during their children's crucial early years, and give their children **healthy early experiences with language and communication.**

What P-CMG looks like

- One hour circle time
 - Oral songs, rhymes, and stories
 - Teaching is directed to parents
 - Short snack break for parents to socialize and connect
 - Predictable routine with lots of repetition
 - Familiar songs and rhymes included
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History of P-CMG

- Pilot Project developed in 1980's by social worker and story teller Barry Dickson and therapist and story teller Joan Bodger for at risk families.
- The goal was to use the pleasure and power of rhymes, songs and stories taught and experienced orally in a group setting to nurture the parent-child relationship and to foster family wellness.

Benefits



Child Benefits

- Show a marked improvement in language, pre-literacy and cognitive skills and general knowledge
- Gain self-esteem
- Develop social skills
- 93% of parents said the program had lasting effects on their child

Parent Benefits

- Gain confidence as learners and parents
- Learn appropriate alternatives to physical control
- Learn new ways of handling stressful times
- Develop a network of friendship and support
- 96% of parents continued to sing and rhyme with their children after the program finished
- 78.3% of parents keep in touch with other families met through P-CMG

Parent/Child Benefits

- Learn and keep a repertoire of rhymes, songs and stories
- Strengthen parent/caregiver-child relationship
- 91.6% of parents agreed that participating in the P-CMGP had enhanced their relationship with their child

Community Benefits

- Effectively deliver their mandate(s) for families with young children
- Build and strengthen their communities
- Provide a safe entry point for other services
- Provide transferable skills for staff to use in other service areas
- 63.3% of parents still regularly visit the site where they participated in Mother Goose (library, non-profit, neighbourhood house, etc.)

RESEARCH SAYS



Programs that include a focus on both adults and children are more likely to improve child development outcomes



- Research supports the **role of song and rhyme in brain development** in Infants, as well as, its relationship **to resilience**
- Resilience is determined by **protective factors**
- **The PCMG-P provides elements that support these findings:**
 - Music, rhyming and rhythm are holistic activities that activate multiple regions across both hemispheres of the brain simultaneously
 - activities provide opportunity for attachment and attunement
 - evidence shows, holding infants and physical touch can affect infants at the molecular level and have an impact on gene expression
 - Singing to an infant has been linked to ‘calming’ of infants and reducing or moderating cortisol
 - Active engagement with music & rhyme self-regulation, initiative taking and relationship building

Oral storytelling evokes strong neurological responses

Our brain is activated in many areas that contribute to building protective factors

- Cortisol in tense moment and Oxytocin in moments of connection
- Limbic system is activated and dopamine is released with a conclusion and 'happy ending'
- Memory is elevated through story, this process requires us to self-reflect, and is related to the development of our sense of self
- Oral storytelling helps the brain to create 'mental imagery', which is linked to memory retention and creative thinking (the 'default' part of the brain) connected to 'flexible thinking'



Participatory singing has shown marked **improvements** **for seniors** who suffer from Dementia

- A recent study shows that dementia and Alzheimer's patients can recall memories and emotions, and have enhanced mental performance after singing
- The brain is activated by emotions and memories attached to music and songs
- Singing songs and using rhymes that are familiar (like old nursery rhymes and classic songs) that will stimulate this brain activity in seniors are most effective
- Music and rhyming is considered a 'physical activity' physical engagement and closeness creates attunement to others (similar to the benefits that affect infants)
- Musical aptitude and music appreciation are two of the last remaining abilities that connect in brains of patients with Alzheimer's and Dementia



INTERGENERATIONAL PCMP-P

Kamloops



North Vancouver



Video



KAMLOOPS

- Began in 2014 at Gemstone Care Centre
 - 12 families with young children, 4-6 residents and 1-2 care aides
 - Currently run 3
 - From this model several other intergenerational programs have started:
 - 2 additional locations (Kamloops Seniors Village & Desert Gardens)
 - School District 73 Strongstart 'Grandfriends Program'
 - Various daycares/preschools
 - Sherwood Park Alberta now runs a Municipal Library Intergenerational Storytime after hearing of Gemstone Program
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NORTH VANCOUVER

- Desire to increase social connectedness
 - Formed partnership with the District Public Library
 - Partnering with Seniors Homes or Seniors Care Facilities both in private and public sectors
 - Reports of previously withdrawn seniors re-engaging or coming to “life” during the sessions
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- First intergenerational began in 2016 at Lynn Valley Care Centre
 - 15 families with children under 1, 25 residents & 2 care aids
- MAISON winter session of 2017
 - 15 families, seniors will drop by and stay for a while with their care aid (*most of the times they were taking the seniors from one place to another*)
- AMICA fall session 2017
 - 10 families 20 seniors, 2 aides

*STORYTELLING

After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world."

~Phillip Pullman~

"There have been great societies that did not use the wheel, but there have been no societies that did not tell stories."

~Ursula K. Le Guin~



Lessons Learned



* Collaboration is key

- Material selection

- Include traditional songs, stories and rhymes with historical lyrics (Baa Baa Blacksheep, Twinkle twinkle, Old McDonalds Farm)
- Stick with historical lyrics

- Foster Relationships

- Facilitators and Care Aides can model this
 - Learn residents names, use snack time
 - Ensure adequate time for reflection after each session which includes a representative from Care Facility!
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* Funding

- Necessary
- Can tap into funding opportunities for early years and seniors
- Cost sharing = increased chance of sustainability
- *Kamloops has received funding from*
 - DOMTAR
 - TELUS
 - Local Women's Leadership Council
 - United Way
 - BC Community Response Network



Parent Feedback

“These program are how we foster empathy and respect for our elders and make the world a kinder place.”

“The socialization and inclusive component of this particular program is brining people together who wouldn't normally interact. This is how you build community. What a gift!”

“It's the single best thing I have done with my baby...highly recommend this program.”

“I actually like this better than the regular MG groups.”

“I enjoy seeing the excitement of the babies as we sing, as well as the joy and excitement in the residents as they watch us.”



Seniors' Feedback

"This is great, my grandchildren can't afford to live in Vancouver. I am happy to be part of this fabulous program."

"I love seeing the all the children. They bring so much energy."

"It brings back a feeling of family, wonderful memories of nurturing my own children"

"If it is Mother Goose day and someone visits me- they have to come to MG too- I don't want to miss the smiling children's faces."



Facilitator & Staff Feedback

"I see the seniors to be happier, more compliant and in some cases, medications have been reduced."

"While I was facilitating the P-CMG program my father was coming to the end of his life. I was amazed at how nurturing, supportive and healing it was to sit in the circle with parents and children and sing songs, share rhymes and tell stories. It really helped me at this difficult time."

"Watching the relationships build across the generations is amazing. I love seeing how the children 'walk' the residents in and out of the group."

"Seeing the benefits this program has on the residents is amazing! They love interacting with the little ones and look forward to their weekly visit."



*FINAL QUOTE:

“Over the years, Gemstone Care Centre has seen many residents come and go. By providing the opportunity to participate in this Intergenerational PCMG-P, we are facilitating the recovery of old memories and also create new ones. The residents who participate really look forward to it and some even had the chance to enjoy their great-grandchildren attending. It is magical to see both new and old parents sharing advice and stories. For our residents there is nothing better than time and this program is time well spent.” - Crystal Clarke, recreational coordinator at Brocklehurst Gemstone Care Centre

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